

FLAGS OF THE THIRD REICH 1: WEHRMACHT



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FLAGS OF THE THIRD REICH 1: WEHRMACHT

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Author's note

This is the first title in a series of three Osprey Men-At-Arms books on the 'Flags of the Third Reich'. The present volume deals with the flags and standards of the Wehrmacht – that is the German Army, Navy (Kriegsmarine), and Air Force (Luftwaffe). Book 2 will cover the flags and standards of the Waffen-SS and the non-German Foreign Volunteers. Book 3 will contain flags, standards and vehicle command flags of the Nazi Party, the SA, the Allgemeine-SS, the NSKK, the NSFK and the German police.

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Publisher's note

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FLAGS OF THE 3rd REICH

FLAG TERMINOLOGY

When describing the details of a flag it is assumed that it is flying from a staff on the left as viewed; the side of the flag which faces the observer is called the 'obverse' and the other side the 'reverse'. However, it should be noted that this method employed to 'read' a flag does not apply in the case of regimental flags and standards used by the German armed forces. Traditionally the German military have always referred to the obverse and reverse of their Colours as the 'left side' and 'right side' respectively. This practice is the result of the position in which the flag or standard is held in relation to the bearer. For the purpose of describing a German military flag or standard it is assumed that the staff is held in front of the bearer with the flag flying over his head towards the rear. The *right side* of the flag (normally referred to as the

reverse) is on the bearer's right side, and the flag's *left side* (the *obverse*) is on the bearer's left side. This method has been used throughout this book with the exception of the Reichskriegsflagge, the flag for the Hoch-und Deutschmeister Regiment and the standard for the SA Regiment 'Feldherrnhalle'.

Certain terms used in this work may require explanation:

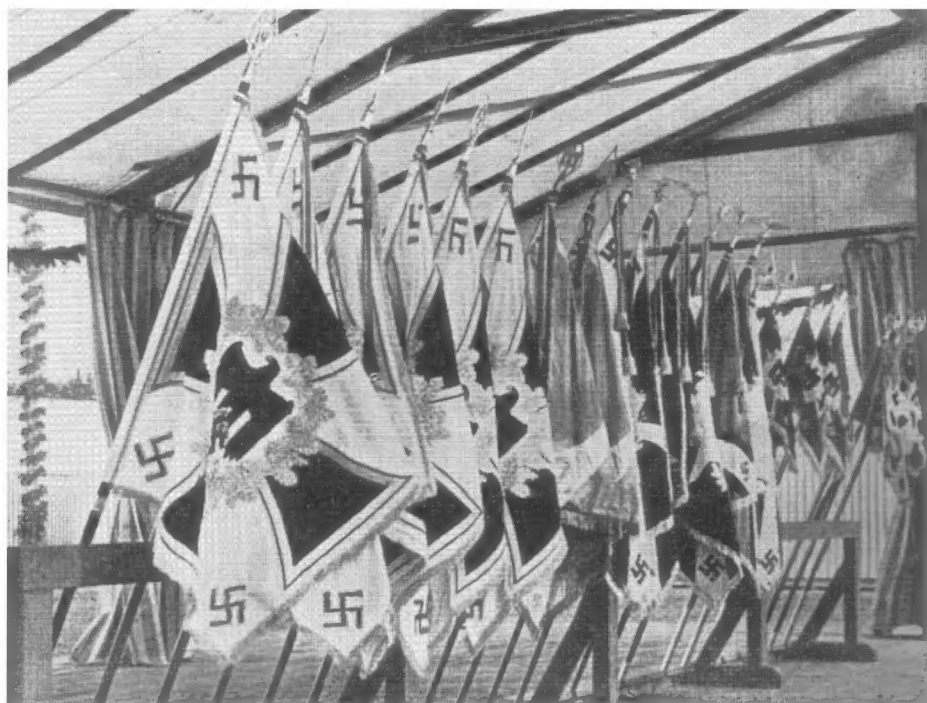
Active & Inactive: Normally refers to the rays of a star or sun symbol, illustrated with undulating curves in an 'active' fashion or in a stiff and 'inactive' manner.

Banner: A square or rectangular heraldic flag with a design usually painted or embroidered; it is carried suspended from a cross bar fixed to an upright pole.

Canton: The portion of a flag, generally rectangular in shape, occupying the upper corner nearest the hoist. The canton often, but not necessarily, covered a quarter of the flag's area.

Colour(s): Refers to the ceremonial flags and standards of the armed forces. In the plural can also

The Nuremberg 'Flag Hall'. Throughout the annual period when the Party Congress was in progress, military units taking part in the various military events held at Nuremberg were able to leave their unit Colours on display under armed guard in a special temporary 'Flag Hall'.



signify the whole suite of flags worn by a ship – a warship's 'Colours' are its ensign, jack and pennant.

Device: An emblematic or heraldic drawing, design or figure.

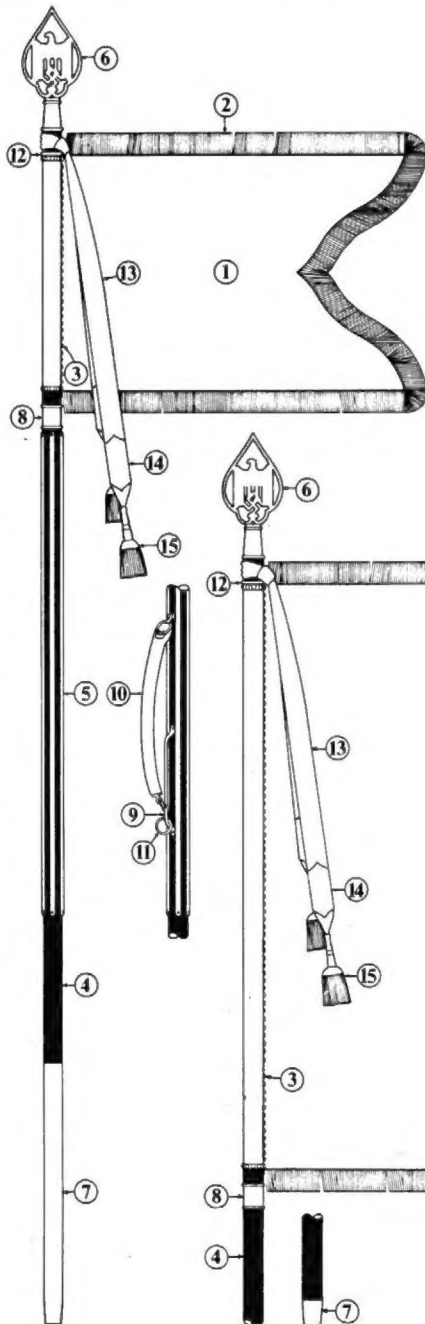
Emblem: State or national; a design of heraldic or other symbols used by some states or nations to fulfil the function of a coat-of-arms.

Ferrule: A protective metal cap or shoe fitted over the lower end of a staff.

Field: The basic area of a flag; it also refers to the colour of a flag.

Finial: A cast or carved ornament, such as a spearhead, placed at the top of a staff.

Flag: In general any piece of cloth attached along one



Components of German flags and standards

(1) Flag-cloth

(2) Fringe

(3) Nails

(4) Staff

(5) Metal fillets

(6) Finial

(7) Ferrule

(8) Battalion ring

(9) Bracket

(10) Leather arm pad

(11) Ring

(12) Streamer retaining ring

(13) Streamers

(14) Streamer plaque

(15) Streamer tassel

side to a staff or halyard, intended to fly freely in the wind. Flags are divided by their shape into several categories: rectangular or square flags, swallow-tailed, triangular flags, pennants. Flags which are intended for general use in all weathers are made of bunting which was originally a loose woven, light woollen cloth (now usually reinforced with man-made fibre). Unit flags and standards intended for ceremonial use are generally made of silk. The proportions of a flag are described as the ratio of the length to the breadth: for German flags whose length was twice the breadth it was shown as 1:2. In German military usage unit flags (Fahnen) were square in shape and were in general carried by foot troops.

Fly: The part of the flag farthest from the staff or mast.

Hoist: The part of the flag nearest to the staff or mast.

Motto: A word or phrase, sometimes in a classical language, inscribed on a scroll accompanying a coat-of-arms or state emblem.

Pole: A wooden or metal upright to which is attached, or from which is flown, a flag. Term used in this work to refer to non-portable flag poles.

Scroll: A long narrow riband normally displayed above or below an emblem and inscribed with a motto.

Staff: A wooden upright to which is attached the flag cloth. Term used in this work to refer to a portable item.

Standard: Strictly speaking a flag which 'stands by itself'. In modern usage standard has come to mean practically the same as 'banner'. In German Army usage a standard (Standarte) referred to the swallow-tailed flag carried by cavalry and motorised troops and certain motorised detachments of foot troops. The SA formation 'Standarte' is what would normally be referred to in English as a banner.

Swallow-tailed flags: Flags which have a triangular section cut out of the fly in order to make them 'forked'. Can be referred to as a 'burgee'. German Army standards had a 25cm-deep section cut out of the fly of the standard-cloth in a special shape known as a 'hussar cut'.

Paul Casberg, the artist and painter responsible for the design of many of the flags and standards

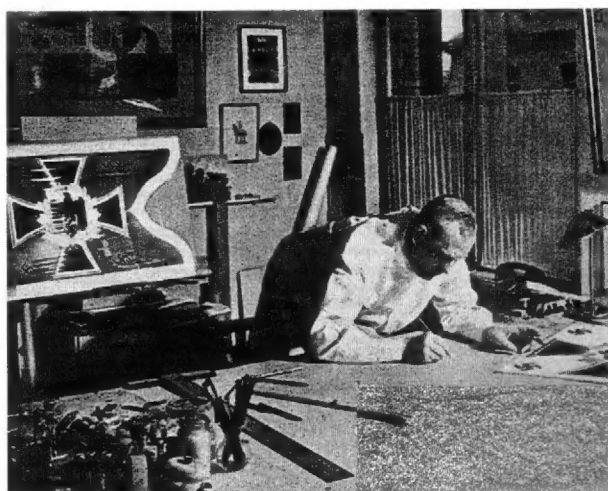
featured in this book, as well as other military accoutrements, seen here at work in his studio.

COLOURS

The decision to reintroduce unit Colours for the armed forces of the new Wehrmacht involved many problems. No unit flags and standards had been produced since before 1914. Those flags that survived the Great War and Germany's subsequent revolutionary violence were, although held in esteem, considered unsuitable to represent the new military units. In many cases it was felt that their designs did not reflect the influence of the new political movement in Germany.

Paul Casberg, the well-known master painter and illustrator, was commissioned to design the new Army Colours, a commission which, in his own words, he considered to be 'the most beautiful order I have ever received'. Considerable problems confronted Casberg in his quest to resurrect a skilled workforce necessary to undertake the detailed and specialised embroidery work. This type of work had, since 1914, been allowed to lapse. The women who had originally been engaged in the industry and should have been capable of producing the high degree of workmanship needed were no longer available in the numbers required; they had long since been dispersed, and their skills and knowledge had almost died out. The first task was therefore to discover surviving experts who, with their past experience, would be willing and able to train new blood to carry out the work.

When first considering designs for the new regimental Army Colours Paul Casberg contemplated introducing double-sided flags. After numer-





Above: The initial stage in the production of the silk embroidered flag was the tracing out of the design onto the material. These tracings served as the precise guidelines for the

women responsible for the hand-embroidered needlework.

Right: The silk flag-cloth was stretched on a wooden frame where it was worked



upon by two skilled needlewomen working in unison, one to each side. The design was meticulously built up, and as each section was completed the flag-cloth

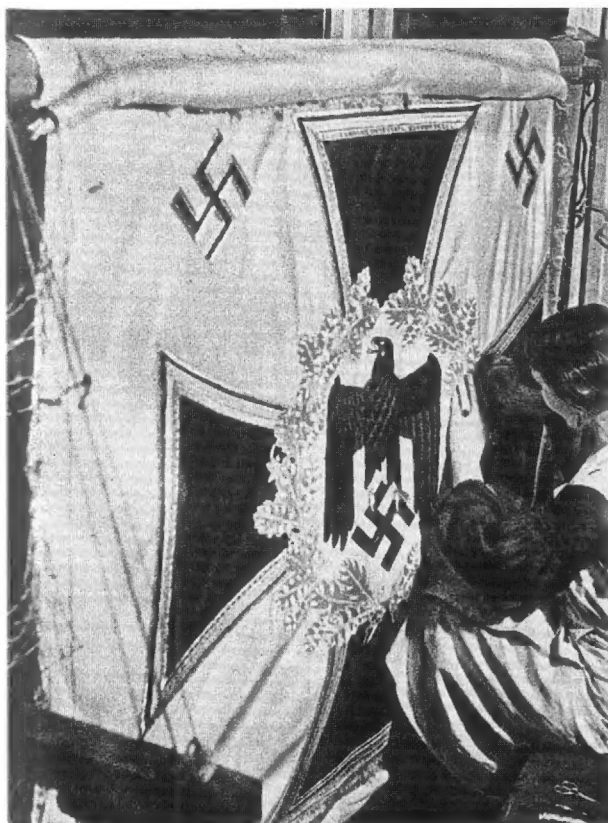
was wound around the upper roller of the frame to keep the entire cloth taut and avoid any distortion to the patterning.

ous tests and much discussion it was decided that this type of Colour would prove unsuitable. The wool-like filling necessary as a lining for the double-sided flag was found to be useless in wet conditions. The fabric of the flag would be susceptible to mildew, and when rolled the flag's metallic threads could be damaged gradually from within by its own humidity. The decision was therefore taken that all unit flags were to be produced from a single piece of heavy-quality silk with their designs appliquéed and embroidered on both sides.

Despite the introduction of the new National Socialist emblems, many design features of these new unit Colours and their accessories had their origins deep in German military history.

The overall size of the flags used by the Army and the Navy of 125cm square (Air Force flags being just

1cm larger) corresponded to the size of the former Army flags from the time of Kaiser Wilhelm II. The eagle featured in the centre of the field on the flags and standards of the three armed services all faced the staff – symbolically towards the enemy – thus avoiding the error perpetuated on the flags of the Frederickian period. The Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine respectively featured 'inactive' and 'active' white wedges, which although somewhat narrower were yet another aspect of former Imperial Army flags and standards. The State Police flags originally presented to the Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring' – that later became the flags for the various battalions of the Regiment 'General Göring' and I Battalion, Parachute Regiment 1 – were closely modelled on the flags of the Prussian Army. The Prussian eagle in an attitude of flight, grasping a



Putting the finishing touches to the embroidery work on the vertical frame

prior to further work being carried out on the horizontal frame.

sword and lightning bolts, placed below a riband bearing the words 'Pro Gloria et Patria', were emblems hardly altered since the time of Frederick the Great. Even the Luftwaffe's use of wreaths of silver laurel leaves recalled features originally used by the old army in green, silver or gold.

Not only were the size of these new flags, the choice of certain designs and the use of selected colours influenced by past military history; the staff itself, the fittings, the 74 nails used to fasten the flag-cloth to the wooden staff, the finial at the top of the staff, the streamers tied below it, and the 'Bataillonsring' all had their origins in earlier times.

Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic

When the regiments of the Imperial German Army marched to the front during the opening months of the First World War they carried with them their unit flags. This practice rapidly ceased; for the remainder

of the war flags belonging to units on active service at the front were held for safekeeping in the offices of the commanding officers of the replacement battalions. If a unit was based on home soil then its flag was kept in the office of the battalion commanding officer.

In 1914 the old Imperial Army possessed 877 regimental flags, 105 standards, 337 Landwehr flags and 21 Landwehr standards. At the conclusion of the war and during the ensuing revolutionary period in Germany, before the establishment of the Reichswehr, the following Colours were lost to the Army: 51 regimental flags, 3 standards, 25 Landwehr flags and 2 Landwehr standards. On 21 November 1918 in the city of Posen (now Poznań, Poland) 65 flags and standards that belonged to distinguished units of the Imperial German Army were deliberately burnt in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Poles.

During the time of the Weimar Republic no new unit flags and standards were presented; only the Colours of the old Army were paraded. Not until 16 March 1936, on the anniversary of the reintroduction of universal military conscription, was it announced that unit flags and standards would once more be bestowed. The first of these new flags and standards were presented on 21 April 1936 to units of the new Luftwaffe.

The Führer Decree of 16 March 1936

On 16 March 1936 Adolf Hitler, as the Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht, bestowed new Colours to the Wehrmacht by virtue of the following decree to the armed forces: 'On the first anniversary of the re-birth of the German right to bear arms I bestow unit Colours upon the armed forces.'

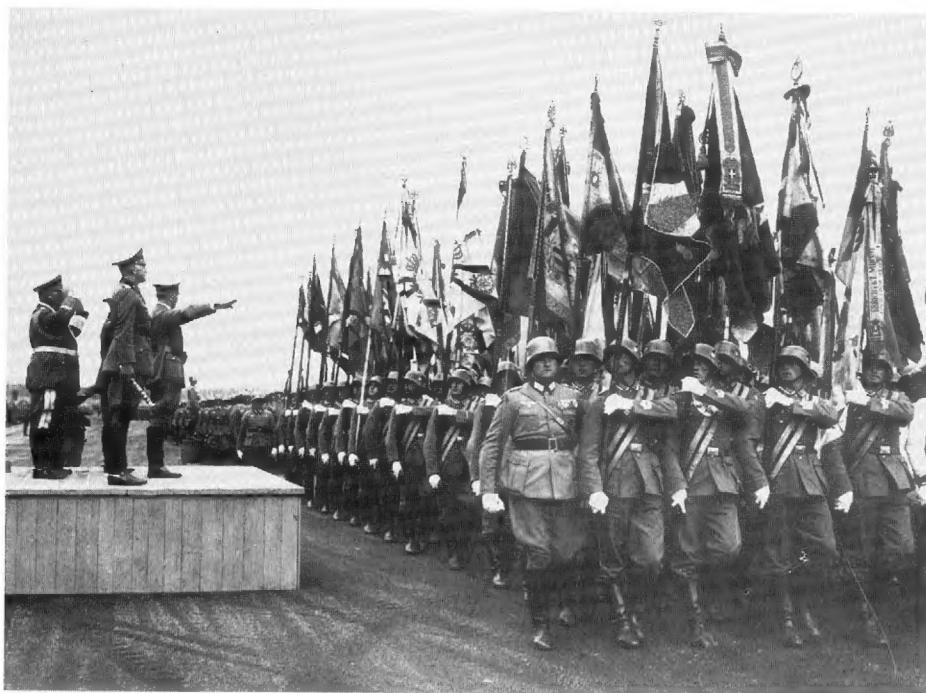
The glorious existence of the old Army came to an end as a result of the events of 1918. The courageous spirit of soldiers put to the test through the centuries can only be suppressed at a time of national misfortune, but it can never be destroyed.

The new Colours shall be a symbol of this ideal towards which to strive.

(Other details shall be left to the Minister of War.)

Berlin, 16 March 1936. (Signed) The Führer and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Adolf Hitler.'

Most of the armed forces' Colours were presen-



The Armed Forces parade in Nuremberg in the presence of the Führer; flags and standards of the old Army being borne past the saluting base, 8 September 1936.

ted during the years 1936 and 1937. By 1939 all existing units are presumed to have received their Colours; it would appear, however, that no official list giving the names of the units of all branches of the Wehrmacht that received flags and standards, as well as the dates and places of presentation, was ever published. (If such a list did exist it has so far not come to light. In the author's earlier book *Flags and Standards of the Third Reich, Army, Navy & Air Force*, published 1975 by MacDonald and Janes, an attempt was made to gather as much information as possible on the subject of the presentation of new Colours to the various units of the Wehrmacht. This resulted in the listing of five pages of published information representing 506 known individual Colours having been presented, with many more referred to but not actually numbered.)

Units raised or redesignated in wartime

No presentation of new Colours to units raised during the war took place even though they were intended to remain in existence post-war. Certain individual units established before the outbreak of the war received their unit Colours after September 1939, notably the Führerbegleitbataillon. The Führer Escort Battalion, which had existed during the pre-war years as a Command and was organised when

the military situation required it, became a permanent Escort Battalion from 29 September, and received a standard of a special design on 30 September 1939.

It was intended that regulations were to be issued after the end of the war – assuming that the Axis forces were victorious – regarding the matter of unit traditions. Until that time it was ordered that any unit, even if it had been absorbed by or posted to another regiment or formation, was to retain the tradition it had formerly held. Those units whose function was officially changed due to the exigencies of wartime were required to continue using the original flags or standards presented to them during peacetime. Even if they should have been entitled to carry a different form of Colour or a Colour in a different arm-of-service colouring, they were obliged to retain the original for the duration.

Projected commemorative streamers

During 1939, on a date not precisely established, the Führer ordered that those units of the armed forces which had taken part in the entry into Austria, the occupation of the Sudetenland and Bohemia-Moravia, and the 'Homecoming' of Memel were to carry commemorative streamers on their flags and standards, one streamer for each operation. Although

special regulations were issued by the Army High Command laying down that the commemorative streamers would be issued for the appropriate Army flags and standards at the end of hostilities, these streamers were not presented. However, despite their not being issued, the official description of these streamers was promulgated.

For the entry into Austria the colours of the streamers were to be those on the ribbon issued for the commemorative medal of 13 March 1938. The streamer was to have a wide central band of red with a narrow edging on each side of white, black, and white in equal proportions: a combination of both the German and Austrian national colours. An inscription on the streamer displayed the legend 'Österreich 13.März 1938'. The length of streamers for Army flags was 100cm with a width of 15cm, and for Army standards a length of 60cm and a width of 10cm.

For the Sudetenland occupation the streamer colours were to have been those as used on the ribbon

of the commemorative medal of 1 October 1938. The streamer was to have a central band of red flanked by slightly wider bands of black, edged overall along both sides with narrow borders of white. Black, red and black were the colours of the Sudetenland. The inscription on the streamer was to be 'Sudetenland 1.Oktober 1938'. The dimensions were as those given above.

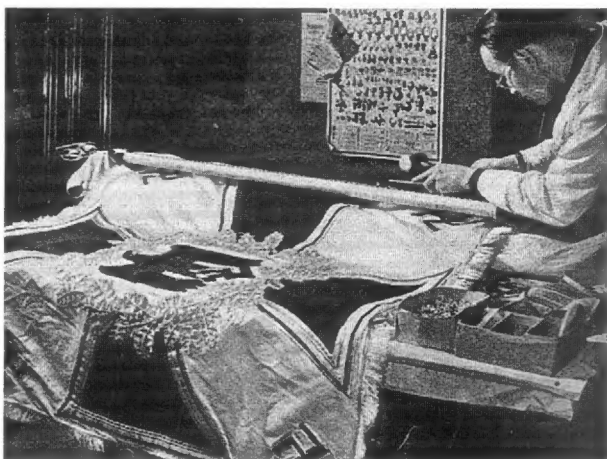
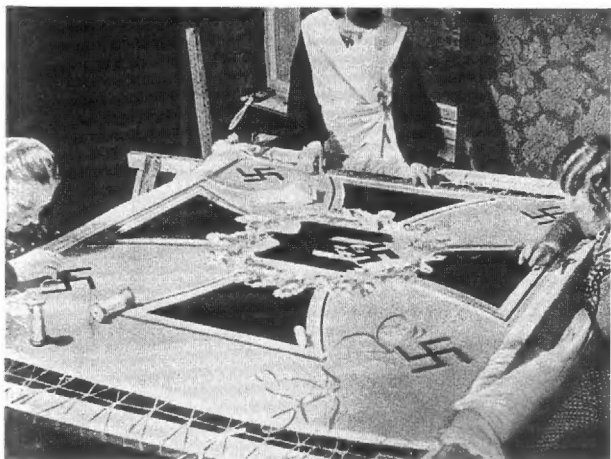
To commemorate the total occupation of Czechoslovakia which took place 164 days after the initial entry into the Sudetenland a streamer displaying the same colours was planned. To distinguish the streamer, a clasp in bronze-coloured metal displaying in relief a view of the Hradschin castle in Prague (the centre of German administration in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) was to be fixed to the streamer braid. This 'Prager Berg' bar was a larger version of the clasp worn on the ribbon for the commemorative medal for 1 October 1938, which had, after 1 May 1939, been extended to include those persons who had rendered valuable service in organising the 'Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia'. The dimensions for this streamer were as given above.

The annexation of Memel from Lithuania was

Left: Needlewomen working on the wreath of silver oak leaves and the highlighting of the eagle's feathers.

Left, below: Almost completed, this Army flag has the finishing touches put to the design of the Iron Cross and the corner swastikas.

Below: Complete with its silver fringe, the finished Army flag has the selvedge of its cloth precisely nailed to the staff.





The climax of the 75th Jubilee reunion celebrations held in Berlin for the former Imperial Guard Regiments. The flags of the old Guard Regiments are paraded by a Colour party from the young Wehrmacht during a special church parade held on the Königsplatz, 5 May 1935.

regarded as a 'special task of honour for the German Navy'. The German claim that Memel was an 'alte deutsche Burg' (60 per cent of the population being German) was pressed to the extent of a bloodless occupation which resulted in an extra 1000 square miles being added to the Reich. To commemorate the landings and entry into Memel a streamer was planned in the same colours as the ribbon of the commemorative medal of 22 March 1939. It was to have a central band of green flanked by equal bands of white flanked in turn by wider bands of red, edged on both sides with slightly narrower bands of white. The streamer bore the legend 'Memel 22.März 1939'. The dimensions were as given above.

Arm-of-service colours

Unlike Imperial German regimental Colours, with their numerous designs, emblems and colourings, the unit flags and standards introduced for the armed forces of the Third Reich tended to conform in basic design.

In order to differentiate between the various branches within the Army and the Air Force for whom unit flags were designed and subsequently presented, certain selected colours were employed as

the background fields, these corresponding to the unit's arm-of-service colour (*Waffenfarbe*). This system of identification by colour had originated during the First World War, continued in use with the Reichswehr, and was developed in a highly complex form by the Wehrmacht. Separate and distinctive colours were appointed to be used by every type of Army and Air Force unit or formation possessed by Germany between 1933 and 1945.

Referring to the colour plates in this book, it will be seen that the German Army used on their flags and standards arm-of-service colours as follows: white, bright red, gold-yellow, lemon yellow, Bordeaux red, light blue, light green, black, rose pink, and possibly grass green and copper brown. The Air Force employed fewer colours: gold-yellow, bright red and gold-brown. Exceptions to this system existed, the most notable being the standard for the Führer Escort Battalion and the State Police Flags used by the Army, paratroops, and Regiment 'General Göring' units.

German naval land units and naval schools did not employ *Waffenfarbe* on their flags but instead displayed an appropriate blue as the background colouring.

EMBLEMS

Certain emblems were employed as part of the design for the various unit flags and standards used during the Third Reich. The two most important of these were the German eagle displayed in a variety of forms; and the swastika, the official emblem of the National Socialist German Workers Party. These two emblems were invariably combined as a single design, and very frequently were to be found as the metal finial at the point of the flag staff.

Other distinctive emblems used were the representations of the German Iron Cross, and the use of garlands and wreaths of oak leaves and, in the case of the Luftwaffe, laurel leaves.

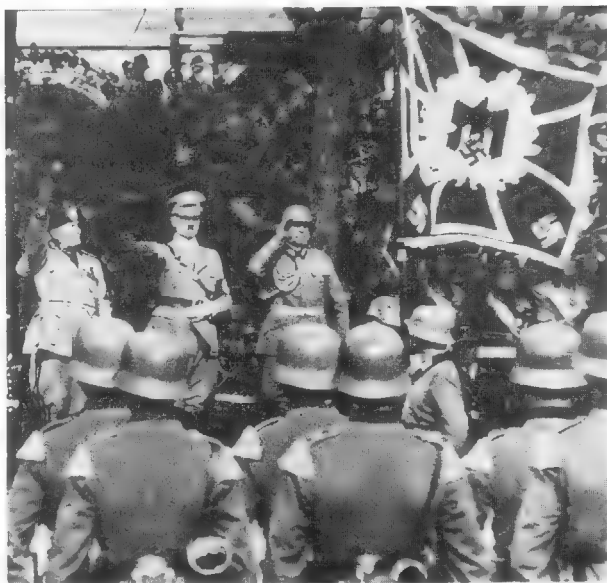
The German eagle

All these emblems had historical origins. The German eagle can be traced back to the 9th century and the Emperor Charlemagne. Crowned 'Holy Roman Emperor' in Rome on Christmas Day AD 800, Charlemagne claimed to be the successor to the Roman emperors; he adopted the eagle of ancient Rome as his ensign and had it placed conspicuously on his palace at Aachen.

The German spread-eagle had its origins as far back as AD 1100, the period of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. The spread-eagle of the Holy Roman Empire was borne by successive German emperors in the attitude known as 'displayed', i.e. with the eagle's body upright, the wings on either side raised to the level of the head and the legs extended beneath them. A distinction was later made between the spread-eagle with a single head and the double-headed eagle, the latter symbolising both royal and imperial dignity. The revolutionaries of 1848, the German Second Reich of 1871 and the Weimar Republic dating from 1919 all adopted the earlier single-headed spread-eagle symbol.

In the years between 1933 and 1945 the eagle was depicted clutching in its talons a garland of oak leaves containing the swastika (Hakenkreuz), the emblem of the NSDAP. This combination of eagle and swastika constituted the official emblem of the Third Reich.

A distinction was made between the form of the German eagle used by the armed forces (Army and Navy) and the Party, with its multitude of paramili-



Adolf Hitler, accompanied by Benito Mussolini, takes the salute at a march past

of Army engineer troops from a higher technical engineering school.

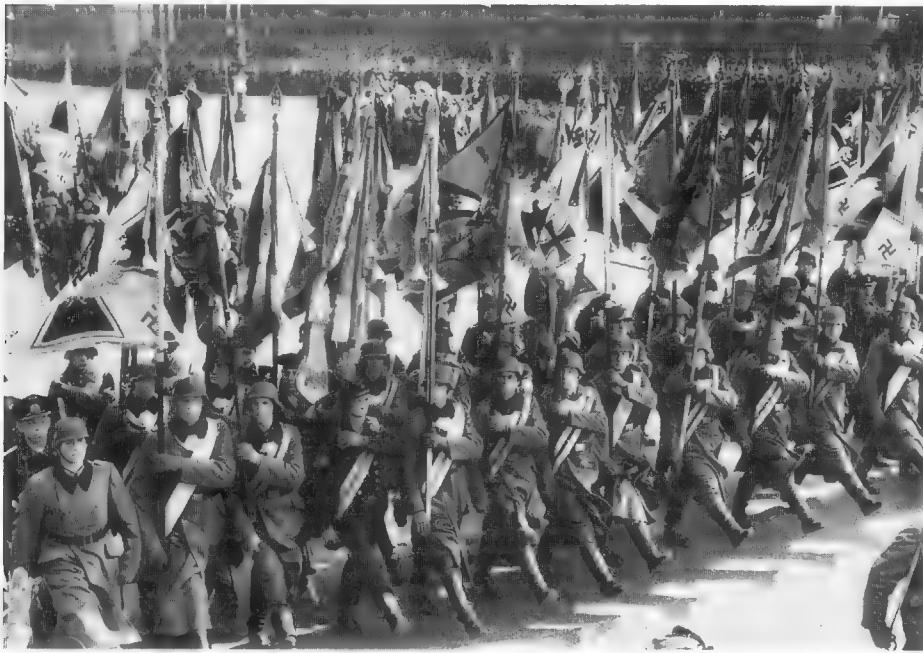
tary formations and political organisations. Because it was the youngest of the three fighting services the new German Air Force, brought into being under the National Socialist regime and from the outset strongly influenced and controlled in its development by Hermann Göring, chose a style of eagle that was in a sense a compromise between the traditional military forces and the new political movement. The German eagle with wings outstretched in an attitude of flight, clutching an unwreathed swastika with one talon, was featured on the new regimental flags of the Luftwaffe.

The Army and Navy used the displayed style of eagle known as the 'Wehrmachtadler' – the armed forces eagle. This featured as part of the design used on their flags and standards. On the standard for the Führer Escort Battalion the armed forces eagle and the political form of eagle were used in combination.

In one form or another the German eagle was used on almost every military flag during the period of the Third Reich.

The swastika

The swastika is an ancient and widely used symbol. Sometimes referred to as a 'Gammadion' or a 'Fylfot' (of a slightly different design, the type favoured by Göring for the central feature used on the State Police Flags), it has traditionally been a symbol of good



Massed unit Colours, both old and new, carried by Colour-bearers from all three branches of the German armed forces parading in line abreast.

fortune and well-being. The word 'swastika' is derived from the Sanskrit: 'su' meaning 'well' and 'asti', 'being'. The swastika is considered to be a representation of the sun, being found associated with the worship of Aryan sun-gods. It is used as a symbol in both Jainism and Buddhism, as well as being used as a Nordic runic emblem.

By definition the true swastika is a primitive symbol or ornament in the form of a cross, the arms of equal length, with a section of each arm projecting at right angles from the end of each arm, all in the same direction and usually clockwise. Hitler chose the Hakenkreuz – literally a hooked cross – or swastika as the emblem for the National Socialists. Adopted as the official symbol of the National Socialist regime and combined with the German eagle, the traditional emblem of Germany, it was used in one form or other on almost all German military and regimental flags and standards of this period.

The Iron Cross

The origins of the German Iron Cross are to be found in the history of the Crusades (AD 1074 to AD 1270). German knights, members of the Teutonic (that is German) Order, wore a white surcoat on which was displayed a black cross. The Teutonic Order came into existence in the year AD 1190 in a field hospital for German soldiers before Acre. In AD 1197 the

Order was appointed a religious order of knights, and its influence very rapidly extended throughout Germany. In AD 1226 the 'Hochmeister' or leader of the Order, Hermann von Salza, undertook what he saw as his Christian duty to convert the pagan Prussians. In AD 1237 the Order was united with the Estonian Order of the 'Brothers of the Sword'. The Prussian crusade was so successful that in 1309 the Teutonic Order moved its headquarters to Marienberg (now Malbork, Poland), and before long controlled and physically owned most of East Prussia and modern Latvia. In 1525 the Order became a tributary to Poland and was forced to secularise, the Hochmeister becoming the Duke of Prussia. In the course of the 17th and 18th centuries the Duchy of Prussia transformed itself into a Kingdom, and emerged as a major political power.

Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia adopted the distinctive sign that had for so long been used by the Order when he founded the Iron Cross on 10 March 1813. Similar to the Cross of the French Legion of Honour founded by Napoleon in 1802, the Iron Cross could be awarded without distinction of rank, class or birth. The First and Second Classes of this decoration were made from black cast iron with a silver border and were worn suspended from a black and white ribbon. The Grand Cross was a neck order.

During the war of 1813–15 the Iron Cross was a

respected and coveted decoration, and was considered to be a symbol of national liberation and unity. From 1819 it was featured on the Prussian War and Service Flags; in 1867, on the War Flag of the North German Confederation; and by 1871 it was used on the Imperial War Flag. Its traditional use was continued throughout the Third Reich both as a military decoration and as a feature on the flags and standards of the German Army, Navy and Air Force.

Oak and laurel leaves

The best known of oak trees is the forest oak, yielding hard timber and acorns and having jagged-edged leaves. Because of its strength and ability to survive to a great age the oak has traditionally symbolised those virtues most esteemed in military contexts. An oaken garland represents strength just as a wreath of laurel leaves represents victory. Garlands of oak leaves were used in the design of the Colours of all three branches of the German armed forces as well as a number of other standards.

The laurel leaf is the foliage of the bay tree, and since the time of the ancient Greeks a wreath of laurel leaves has been the crowning emblem of victory. Whereas the flags and standards of the German Army and Navy bore the oak leaf garlands those of the Luftwaffe featured laurel wreaths on the right side of its flags.

PARADING

On 1 January 1937 the High Command of the German Army issued an order regulating the parading of unit flags and standards only for special and solemn events:

(1) Unveiled flags and standards were to be paraded with troops at:

(a) Honour parades, such as the parade for the birthday of the Führer and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht, when at such an event at least one battalion or three squadrons of troops with arms were to take part.

(b) With Honour companies or squadrons for the Führer.

(c) With Salute batteries for the Führer when they took part in a march past.

(d) At the swearing-in of recruits (see also the Flag Order of 1944, below).

(e) At solemn events, e.g. national holidays (see Flag Days for the German Armed Forces, below) and at special inspections, inaugurations etc, when the accompanying troops were to be of a strength no less than one battalion or three squadrons with arms.

(f) At funeral parades when the strength of the accompanying troops was to be at least one battalion or three squadrons with arms.

(2) Troops marching to and from their training camps were instructed to carry their Colours rolled and covered. They were not to parade their Colours during such a march.

(3) Flags and standards were not to be carried during:

(a) Field manoeuvres.

(b) At the autumn field manoeuvres or at Wehrmacht manoeuvres, the latter with the following exception:

(4) In the event of a field parade taking place at the completion of a manoeuvre flags and standards were

A large military parade was held in Vienna to mark the Führer's 50th birthday. Tanks from 2. Panzer-Division parade their unit

standard in line abreast past the saluting base set up in the Heldenplatz, 20 April 1939.



to be used. The Colours had to be brought to the manoeuvre area by special order and were only allowed to be unveiled when actually on the parade ground. On the return march from the area the Colours were to be carried rolled and covered, but only when they were in a perfectly dry condition.

The same orders and conditions for the parading of unit flags applied to German naval land units and naval schools but with the following exceptions:

(1c) Parading with salute batteries was abolished.

(1d) For the swearing-in of naval recruits it was ordered that at least one battalion or three companies of naval troops with arms had to take part.

Unveiled naval flags were also paraded at solemn events, which for the Navy included the ceremonial launching of warships.

Colour parties

The practice employed in the parading of German unit Colours was that the Colours were, without exception, carried by non-commissioned officers and



escorted by junior officers. The smallest Colour party consisted of three men: one Standartenträger (or Fahnenträger) flanked by two Standartenoffizieren (or Fahnenoffizieren). Colours paraded in greater numbers, either in line abreast or as a phalanx, were always escorted by just two officers.

The same procedure applied to the parading of mounted unit standards: the standard was carried by a mounted non-commissioned officer flanked by a mounted escort of two junior officers.

Colours carried during a motorised parade tended to conform to the configuration adopted by foot troops. However, in the case of unit flags and standards carried in a wheeled vehicle, the Colour party rode inside the open vehicle, the Colour-bearer seated in the front seat alongside the driver with the staff of the flag or standard fitted into a special carrier attached to the right side of the transport, whilst the two escorting officers were seated behind.

Armoured battalions were permitted to parade their standards carried on their tanks. When the size of the parade area permitted it, three tanks were driven line abreast past the saluting base. The centre tank carried the standard, the staff being fitted inside the open turret and held in an upright position by a non-commissioned officer. Standing upright in the open turrets of the two flanking tanks were junior escorting officers.

Special insignia worn by Colour-bearers

Colour-bearers from all three services wore distinctive arm shields, used carrying sashes and, with the exception of the Kriegsmarine and the Legion Condor, wore gorgets.

All arm shields, including those of the Regiment 'General Göring', were of a similar pattern with crossed flags on a shield-shaped background that matched the colour of the uniform on which they were worn. These crossed flags were small, somewhat stylised, copies of the actual flags carried, their colouring matching the full-size flags. The shields

A Luftwaffe motorised unit parading its new Colour down the Unter den Linden, Berlin; the seating arrangements for the Colour party can clearly be seen. The special fixture which supported the flag

staff upright is shown fitted to the right side of the vehicle in the foreground. In order not to damage the polished wood of the staff these tubular supports were lined with felt.

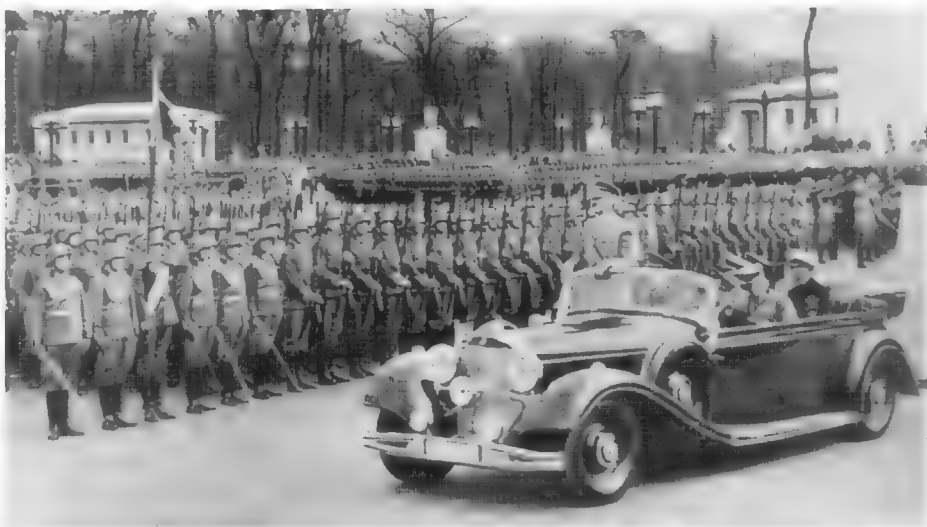
were worn on the left upper arm. The bearer of the Legion Condor did not possess an arm shield.

Carrying sashes, sometimes referred to as baldricks, were worn during ceremonial parades when battalion Colours were trooped. All three services had sashes of similar construction. They were made



A member of a mountain infantry regiment acting as a Colour bearer. Note that while he wears the flag bearer's sash and gorget he does not wear an arm shield.

Berlin, 20 April 1939: Hitler is driven past the men of Nachrichten Abteilung 23 drawn up in review order as part of the Führer's birthday parade.



of semi-stiff leather with wide bullion braiding in either silver or gold and coloured facing cloth matching the bearer's arm-of-service colour. They were worn across the body from right shoulder to left hip.

Gorgetts were kidney- or heart-shaped metal plates which were worn on the bearer's chest, suspended on a narrow, flexible chain worn around the bearer's neck. The design on the front of these plates varied for the services including the Regiment 'General Göring' and the Sturmabteilungen.

Flag Days for the German armed forces

Under the Third Reich ten days during the course of the year were designated as 'Flag Days'; these were chosen to commemorate or celebrate a number of events. The occasions were marked either by a ceremonial parading of unit Colours or the flying of the National War Flag, or both. The 'Flag Days' some of which were declared public holidays were as follows:

- (1) New Year's Day, 1 January
- (2) The National Foundation Day, 18 January
- (3) The Day of National Rising, 30 January (the day Hitler became Chancellor of the German Nation).
- (4) Heroes' Memorial Day, third Sunday in March (flags flown at half mast).
- (5) The Führer's Birthday, 20 April
- (6) The Day of the German Air Force, 21 April (also chosen to commemorate the death in action of the First World War German fighter ace Manfred von Richthofen).

(7) National Holiday of the German People, 1 May (traditional May Day celebrations).

(8) The Day of the German Navy, 31 May (commemorated the Battle of the Skagerrak, known to the British as the Battle of Jutland).

(9) The Day of the German Army, 29 August (commemorated the Battle of Tannenberg).

(10) Harvest Festival, first Sunday after Michaelmas.

With effect from 1 October 1936 the Reichskriegsflagge was raised daily and flown over barracks, on military buildings and from ships of the German Navy (for details of this ceremony see below).

Oath-taking ceremonies

The German soldier's oath of allegiance was the cement that bound him body and soul to his king, emperor, leader or state, and set the seal on his acceptance into his military unit. In Germany the custom had developed over the years, and was fully established by the end of the Thirty Years' War in the 17th century. Each newly established company received its consecration by solemnly nailing the cloth of its flag to the staff. The disbandment of the company was sealed by the dismemberment of the flag, torn from the staff and divided up amongst the company, each member receiving a piece of the material and the standard-bearer receiving the decorated point of the flag staff. With these ceremonies the soldier was sworn in or released from his duties; but as long as the Colours fluttered, life, body and devotion belonged without question to the master to whom the soldier was sworn.

In modern times the oath of allegiance and the ceremony which accompanied it was a somewhat less colourful occasion, but it still remained a formal, solemn event and was no less binding.

Before 2 August 1934 all members of the German armed forces, regardless of rank, had taken an oath of allegiance. This took the form of a declaration of loyalty to the German State. With the death on that date of the aged Reichspräsident, Generalfeldmarschall von Hindenburg, Hitler seized the opportunity to announce publicly that he had consolidated the office of Reichspräsident with that of Reich Chancellor, and that by a Reich Cabinet decree of 1 August 1934 had merged the two offices in his own person. At the same time Hitler assumed the position of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. In this capacity a

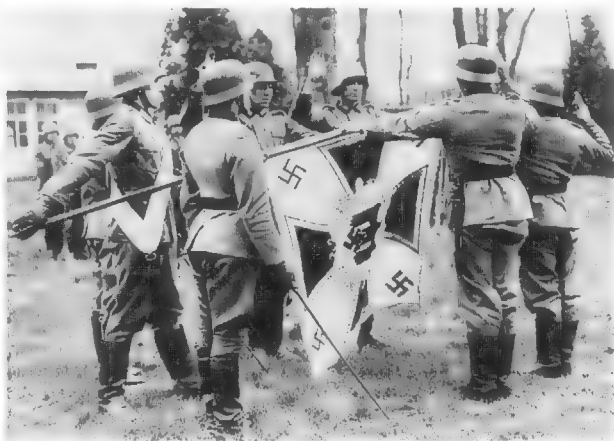
new oath of allegiance, drafted by Hitler himself, was administered to all troops. On the very day that Von Hindenburg died all officers and men of the German Army and Navy took the following oath to their new Commander:

'I swear by God this holy oath: I will render unconditional obedience to the Führer of the German Nation and People, Adolf Hitler, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and will be ready, as a brave soldier, to lay down my life at any time for this oath.'

For the first time since the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II members of the armed forces swore allegiance and obedience to an individual. The significance of this personal oath was to become apparent during the war, at the time of the assassination attempt on Hitler in July 1944, and in particular during the post-war Nürnberg war crimes trials.

On 13 March 1938 Hitler, in his capacity as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, issued a decree from the town of Linz declaring the Austrian Federal Army to be part of the German armed forces, and ordered all members of the Austrian Army to take the oath of allegiance to himself as their Commander-in-Chief.

A recruit entering military service after August 1934 was sworn in on his unit Colour at a special ceremony. The uncovered Colour was paraded in the presence of the troops and officers drawn up for the occasion. Recruits, usually four in number having been chosen to represent all the new entrants, swore their allegiance with an upraised right hand while touching the flag-cloth or staff with the left hand.



Swearing-in of new Army recruits on an infantry flag.

This procedure continued until the new 1944 Flag Order regulations were introduced.

The Flag Order of 1944

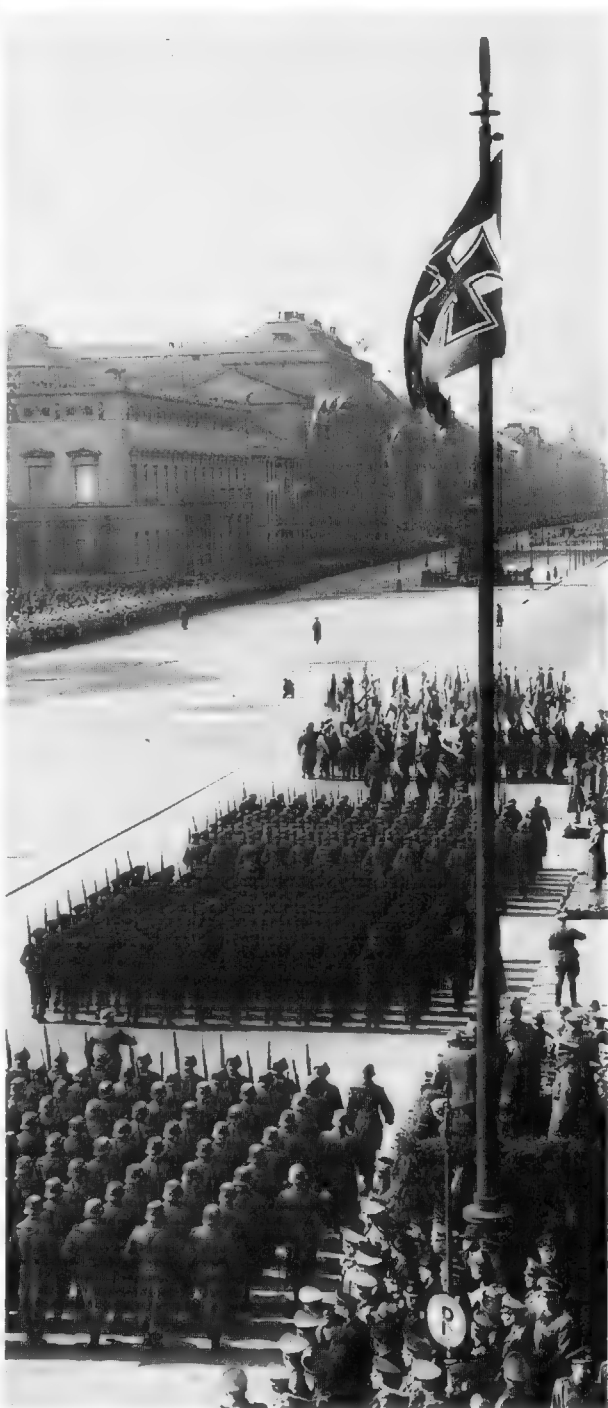
A Führer Order issued by the Chief of the OKW to all units of the Wehrmacht and dated 28 August 1944 laid down new instructions regarding the use of unit flags and standards. The order, which was promulgated on 16 September 1944, had four sections. It stated that:

- (1) In place of unit flags and standards the Reichskriegsflagge was to be used in future.
- (2) On the order of the Commander-in-Chief of the three branches of the armed forces, unit Colours were to be handed over to the museum administration of the appropriate service. This was to have been carried out in accordance with the 'total war' situation and no ceremonial honours were to be accorded.
- (3) Those flags and standards which had been used 'on active service' were permitted to be paraded on special occasions after this order came into effect but depending upon the decision of the High Command of the Wehrmacht.
- (4) Regulations regarding future Colours were to follow.

The purpose and reasoning behind this order is uncertain. It may have been connected with a number of public slights indicating the regime's reduced trust in the armed forces after the assassination attempt against Hitler on 20 July 1944; on the other hand it may simply have been due to the worsening war situation. It is probable that rather than risk unit Colours falling into the hands of the enemy through the capture of regimental barracks which normally housed the items, and the subsequent propaganda advantage that this would have afforded the enemy, Hitler decided to withdraw the unit Colours into service museums. Thus if Germany was overrun and the emblems taken from these museums (which they were), since they were not captured from fighting units, it could technically be claimed they were not taken in battle, traditionally considered a disgrace. Unlike November 1918, actually destroying the Colours by fire in the autumn of

1944 would have been premature, defeatist and unthinkable.

With the promulgation of the Flag Order of 1944 armed forces recruits were no longer sworn in on their unit Colours (where these had been presented), their oath being taken simply on a weapon and in the presence of the National War Flag.



The former Imperial Reichskriegsflagge flown during the military parade held in Berlin on Heroes'

Memorial Day (the Day of Remembrance), March 1938.

THE NATIONAL WAR FLAG

Before the decision was announced under Article 3 of the Nuremberg Flag Law of 15 September 1935 as to the final form of the new Reichskriegsflagge – a decision that Hitler had reserved for himself – the former black, white and red tricolour flag displaying a white-edged black Iron Cross was to be flown alongside the official Swastika Flag on those buildings belonging to the three fighting services.

The new National War Flag was introduced on 7 November 1935. Its introduction was timed to coincide with the official commencement of universal German military conscription. The Reichskriegsflagge was considered as the ensign of the German Armed Forces. It was flown on warships of the Navy, aircraft of the Luftwaffe and on buildings of the armed forces. The National War Flag was hoisted daily in barracks occupied by units of the Wehrmacht. The flag had to be flown from a pole positioned near to the barrack entrance, or failing this, near the guard room or staff building. If none of these places were possible then an alternative position had to be found.

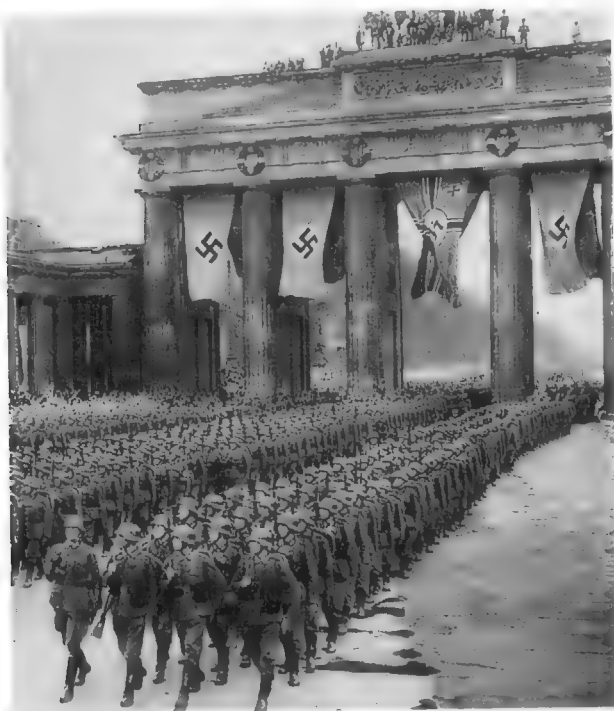
The flag had to be hoisted every morning and lowered every evening. These hoisting and lowering ceremonies took the form of either an ordinary or a ceremonial flag parade. At the ordinary raising of the Reichskriegsflagge at barracks within the Reich the orderly officer of the day, the guard and one musician were paraded. On ceremonial occasions one officer, one platoon with rifles, the guard, the regimental band and the corps of drums were all present for the hoisting of the Colours. When the troops were absent from the barracks the officer commanding the remaining men had to decide if, and in what form, the daily flag parade was to take place.

The proportions of the new Reichskriegsflagge (see Plate A1) were 3:5. It was a red rectangle, upon whose central axis was a white disc edged black and containing a black swastika standing upon its point with its lower limb open towards the hoist. The arms of the swastika were edged with narrow black and white fimbriations. Emanating from the white disc to the four edges of the flag were the horizontal and vertical arms of a cross made up of four white and three black portions. The outer portions of this cross were extended around the circumference of the white disc. Set in the canton was a black Iron Cross positioned on a similarly shaped narrow white background.

Both the obverse and reverse of this flag were of the same design. All National War Flags for general outdoor use, regardless of size, were produced as a design printed on bunting.

ARMY FLAGS

The flags carried by infantry battalions, engineer battalions and rifle and mountain troop battalions were all of the same basic design and size. They differed only in the background fields, which corresponded with their arm-of-service colour. Infantry flags had a white field, those carried by engineer battalions a black field, and those of rifle and mountain troops battalions a light green field (the



German troops taking part in the triumphal parade held in Berlin at the end of the campaign in the West. The Brandenburg Gate is

decorated with the National Flag (the swastika flag) and the National War Flag.

only known exception to this rule is described below). Therefore it is only necessary to describe the flag carried by infantry battalions to represent these four branches of the German Army.

Infantry battalion flags

The arm-of-service colour (Waffenfarbe) appointed for Army infantry battalions was white. The flag consisted of a single 125cm-square piece of hand-woven pure silk (see Plate B1).

Left side

Extending across the length and breadth of the flag's field were the arms of a 122cm-square Iron Cross. The arms of the Cross consisted of four panels of hand-woven black silk, the edges of which were decorated with a 4.8cm-wide silver-aluminium braiding.

In the centre of the flag was a hand-woven pure white silk disc, the edge of which was overlaid with and encircled by an embroidered garland of silver oak leaves. The garland was joined at its base by a gold-embroidered ribbon tied to form a bow. Set centrally inside the garland was the stylised armed forces eagle facing towards the flag staff and clutching in its talons a black swastika. It was embroidered in 'natural' colours: the wings, body and legs were hand-worked in black silk threads with the details of the plumage picked out and shaded in dark and light brown silks; the eagle's beak (matt) and talons (shiny) were worked in gold-yellow silks, the eagle's eye in light grey threads. The height of the eagle from its head to the lower point of the swastika was 43cm, the span of the displayed wings 31.8cm. The oak leaf garland, measured from the bow to the central point of the two oak leaves meeting above the eagle's head, was 52.3cm. The width measured from the farthest leaf in the arm of the Iron Cross to the opposite oak leaf was 62.3cm.

In each of the four corners of the flag was a swastika, 14.2cm square, standing on its point with its lower limb open towards the staff. They were fashioned from black silk, edged with a border of silver-aluminium braiding.

The flag itself was edged on three sides with a double sewn-on fringed border of silver-aluminium strands 4.5cm deep. The fourth side of the flag-cloth had an extra 20cm selvedge which was wrapped



An infantry honour guard and Colour party.

around the wooden staff immediately below the streamer ring and nailed in position. The vertical row of 74 nails appeared on the left side of the flag. A further two sets of eight nails each were used to secure the top and bottom edges of the flag's selvedge around the staff. These nails, which were of silvered polished brass, each had a brass shaft 13mm long and a head 11mm across, and were hammered through the cloth and into the staff 6mm apart. The flag-cloth was reinforced along the row of nails by a strip of silver-aluminium braid 1.2mm wide set between the cloth and the nails.

Right side

The right side of the flag was the same as the left side, except for the armed forces eagle and swastika in the centre of the flag and the four small swastikas in the corners of the flag, which were all mirror images of those emblems on the left side.

Staff, fittings & furniture

The staff used for German Army unit flags was made from a single piece of seasoned oak, painted black and polished. Machine-turned at both ends to give a slight conical effect, it was 3m long from the tip of the finial to the bottom of the ferrule. The finial was cast in light aluminium, ground and polished. Its height including the socket was 28.6cm with a maximum width of 11.5cm. The socket was 7.6cm high, conical in shape with a maximum diameter of 4cm. The Wehrmachtadler emblem within its pointed frame had a height of 11.7cm. The wing span of the silver metal eagle was 8.6cm and the swastika standing on its point measured 3.1cm square. As with all unit flags



Colour bearer from Infanterie-Regiment 'Grossdeutschland'. It is of interest to note that fitted to the staff of this

particular infantry flag are two 'battalion rings', indicating that the unit had been upgraded and received a new title.

and standards, the eagle finial on top of the staff faced to the front.

Fixed by a single silver screw to the wooden staff 5.5cm below the base of the finial socket was a 7mm-deep ring. Made of brass, silvered and polished, its function was to prevent the tied streamer from slipping down the staff.

Also attached to the staff was the 'Bataillonsring', a polished silver metal collar, engraved with the name of the unit or detachment to which the flag had been presented. This ring was made from 0.5cm-thick brass plate, silvered and polished, with a diameter of 45mm and a height of 5cm. The collar was held together by being fastened around the top and bottom by two bevelled rings, and it was fixed to the wooden staff by three silver-headed nails along the join to the collar. It was positioned on the staff 3.5cm below the lower edge of the fastened flag-cloth.

The foot of the oak staff was capped with a 7cm-

deep blunt-ended metal ferrule cast from brass, ground, polished and silvered. The ferrule was slightly conical and was fastened to the staff by a single screw.

Flag streamers

Tied to the staff between the base of the finial socket and the streamer retaining ring was a streamer secured in such a way as to show two unequal lengths. This consisted of a 4.6cm-wide ribbon of silver-aluminium braid with equal-width edges of black, silver and red. It was 1.72m long; with the two red, silver and black hand-constructed tassels at either end of the streamer the length was increased by 18.2cm at each end. Positioned on the streamer at both ends, 3cm above each tassel, was a matt silver metal plaque 4.7cm wide and 12.5cm long from point to point. The edges on the obverse and reverse of both these plaques were decorated on three sides with a line of oak leaves in relief and an armed forces eagle facing to its right towards the staff. On the obverse of the plaque attached to the longest length of the streamer the date '16.März 1935' appeared just below the eagle. On the obverse of the plaque attached to the shorter length, also below the eagle, was the date '16.März 1936'.

Protective covers

To protect the fabric of the flag-cloth from dirt a special cover made of close-woven white muslin was supplied with each flag. It measured 130 × 140cm, was designed to fit over the flag-cloth when it was hung or rolled, and was fastened by tapes.

A further, outer protective covering was supplied for use with unit flags, designed to cover the rolled flag-cloth when the flag was carried or transported. Made from black, waxed, waterproof cloth (artificial leather), it was 176cm long (including the metal cap) and approximately 25cm wide. It was edged in leather and fastened at its base by a small metal buckle and a single leather strap. The metal cap, designed to cover and protect the staff point, was made from 1.2mm thick Tombac alloy plate. It was 19cm high and 14cm wide.

III (Jäger) Battalion, Infantry Regiment 92

The flags for Rifle (Jäger) and Mountain Infantry (Gebirgsjäger) battalions, with the exception of the



Armoured units parade in pre-war Berlin.

green background colour (see Plate B4), were identical in form, size, design and quality to the flags and accessories presented to German Army infantry battalions as described in full above. One notable exception to the normal pattern of Jäger flags is known to have existed, and warrants description.

On 17 November 1941, in order to strengthen the traditional links with the Finnish Army, it was announced by the OKH that III Battalion, Infantry Regiment 92 had been chosen to carry the title 'III.(Jäger) Bataillon, 92.Infanterie-Regiment (Jäger-Bataillon Finnland)' and to become the holders of the First World War traditions of the former Royal Prussian Reserve Jäger Battalion No.27 – Finnischen Jäger Bataillon 27 (Königliches Preussisches Reserve-Jäger-Bataillon Nr.27).

The flag conformed to the normal German Army pattern for rifle units, consisting of a Wehrmacht-adler set in a garland of silver oak leaves against a white background, with the arms of a silver-edged black Iron Cross extending from behind the wreath over the length and breadth of the light green field.

The difference from the normal flag pattern lay in the following details of the left side:

In place of the four small swastikas normally found positioned one to each corner of the square flag were four Finnish emblems. In the lower left corner and in the upper right corner were displayed the Finnish coat-of-arms surrounded by a wreath formed from two branches of green pine needles crossed at the base of the Finnish shield. The Arms of Finland, which date from the middle of the 16th century, display a gold-yellow lion with a golden crown and grasping in the paw of its raised armour-clad right arm a silver-bladed broadsword. The Finnish lion trampling on a Russian scimitar is set on a bright red, gold-edged shield. The red field of the shield is strewn with nine white roses, the national flower of Finland and representing the nine provinces (Maakunta) of Finland.

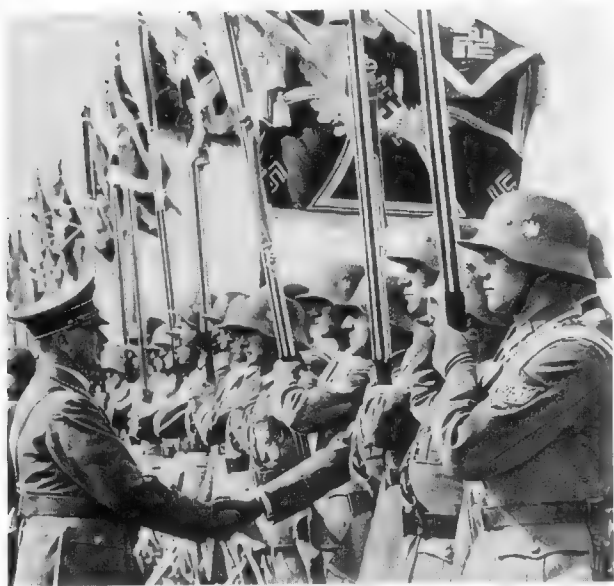
In the upper left and lower right corners of the flag-cloth were displayed representations of the 'Finnisches Jäger Kreuz'. This was a silver Iron Cross the arms of which were entwined with a wreath made of pine-needles and overlaid with a stylised form of the numbers '2' and '7', a reference to the First World War reserve Jäger battalion number 27.

The details on the right side of this flag cannot be established but in all probability were the same as those described for the left side.

ARMY STANDARDS

The German Army employed 'Standarten' or standards for units other than those which carried flags (Fahnen). In the main these were mobile units, either wheeled, tracked, mounted or horse-drawn. Eleven different coloured standards are known to have existed. The background arm-of-service colour of the field for these eleven standards was as follows:

Pink for armoured units, gold-yellow for cavalry, bright red for artillery, light blue for supply, lemon-yellow for signals, white for motorised infantry, black for motorised engineers, light green for motorised rifles, and Bordeaux red for chemical warfare troops. Before the outbreak of war it is probable that both light brown and grass green were used for standards



Massed Colours paraded before Hitler. Clearly shown here are the special iron brackets and padded slings, part of the furniture for cavalry standards (second and third standard

from the camera). It is particularly interesting that the standard bearer's arm shield is being worn not on the right but on the left upper arm, contrary to normal practice.

presented to certain Army signals units, and lorried rifle and motorcycle units, respectively. A standard of a special design with a background colour of bright red was used by the Führer Escort Battalion.

With the exception of the standard for the Führer Escort Battalion, which is described separately, all eleven coloured patterns of the Army standard were identical in size, design and quality, and therefore a detailed description of the standard for cavalry units has been chosen to represent them all.

Cavalry standards

The standard-cloth consisted of a single piece of hand-woven completely flawless silk measuring 75cm long \times 51cm high. In the fly of the cloth was a shaped, cut-out section 25cm deep – the so-called ‘hussar-cut’ – which ran to a point on the horizontal axis of the central field. The cloth was gold-yellow, the arm-of-service colour for cavalry (see Plate C1).

Left side

The arms of an Iron Cross extended across the length and breadth of the field. The Iron Cross measured 50cm \times 50cm, and the arms consisted of four black

silk sections which were edged with 2.4cm-wide aluminium braid.

In the centre of the standard was a hand-woven pure white silk disc, the edge of which was overlaid with and encircled by an embroidered garland of silver oak leaves. The garland was tied at its base by a gold-embroidered ribbon tied to form a bow. Set centrally within the garland and against the white background was the stylised Wehrmachtsadler clutching a black swastika and facing towards the staff. Embroidered in black silk with the details of the feathers picked out in dark and light brown silks, the beak in matt and the talons and legs in lustrous gold-yellow, and the eye in light grey. The height of the eagle from its head to the lower point of the swastika was 18.9cm, the span of the displayed wings 13.9cm. The oak leaf garland, measured from the bow to the central point of the two oak leaves meeting above the eagle's head, was 23.7cm. The width measured from the farthest leaf in the arm of the Iron Cross to the opposite oak leaf was 32.6cm.

In each of the four corners of the standard was a swastika standing on its point with its lower limb open toward the staff. The swastikas measured 6cm \times 6cm and were made from black silk edged with a border of silver aluminium braid.

The standard-cloth had a double, sewn-on fringed border of silver aluminium strands 6.5cm deep. The unfringed edge had a 20cm selvedge which was wrapped around the wooden staff immediately below the streamer retaining ring and nailed in position. The vertical row of 30 nails appeared on the left side of the standard. A further two sets of nine nails each secured the top and bottom edges of the standard's selvedge around the staff. The nails, of polished brass and silvered, with a brass shaft 13mm long and a head 11mm across, were hammered into the staff at distances of 6mm apart. The standard-cloth was reinforced along the row of nails by a strip of silver aluminium braid 1.2cm wide set between the cloth and the nail heads.

Right side

The armed forces eagle and swastika in the centre of the standard, and the four swastikas in the corners of the standard, were all mirror images of those emblems on the left side; in every other respect the right side of the standard was the same as the left.

Staff, finial & ferrule

The staff used for German Army standards was made from a single piece of seasoned oak, painted black and polished. Machine-turned at both ends to give a slightly conical effect, it was 2.85m in length from the tip of the finial to the bottom of the ferrule. It had a maximum diameter of 45mm. The finial was cast in a silver-coloured alloy, 'Hellumium', ground and polished. Its design and dimensions were identical to the finials used on Army flags, already described.

The foot of the staff was capped with a silver-plated polished metal ferrule 13cm deep; 11cm above this shoe the wooden staff was fashioned to produce a gentle indentation in the wood. An additional 57cm-long detachable metal ferrule was supplied for use on this staff. Made of exactly the same material as the 13cm-long ferrule, it had a bayonet attachment that allowed it to be fitted in place over the lower portion of the staff, thus providing added protection for that part of the staff which was liable to come into contact with the interior of vehicles.

Staff for cavalry and mounted troops

The standard staff used by cavalry and mounted troops was of the same overall length and proportions as that used by motorised troops but with the following exceptions (see the diagram accompanying the Flag Terminology section, page 5):

The metal ferrule was 26.5cm deep and, being

shorter than the 57cm type used for motorised troops, allowed more of the wooden staff to be seen. Secured to the side of the staff, 1.52m measured from the finial, was a bracket made from hand-wrought, highly polished, nickel-plated iron; its overall length was 37cm and it was 10mm thick. Fitted over this bracket was a hand-wrought silver ring 8mm thick with a diameter of 4.2cm. Attached to the staff directly above and in line with the iron bracket was a hinged silver joint to which was fitted a hand-sewn narrow leather arm pad 38cm long. The lower end of this pad was attached to a pair of jointed rings, one of which was in turn attached to the iron bracket. With the aid of the fitted buckle the leather arm pad could be adjusted. The hinged joint allowed it to move with a certain amount of flexibility and the jointed rings at its lower end allowed the pad to move freely along the iron bracket.

Streamer, fittings & fillets

Fastened to the standard staff in the same position and in the same manner as on the Army flag was a streamer, identical in every respect to that used on flags and held in position by a retaining ring. Fixed to the staff in the same manner as the 'Bataillonsring' on the Army flag staff was an 'Abteilungsring' bearing the engraved name of the unit.

A distinctive feature of the standard staffs used by both cavalry and motorised troops were the silver

The presentation of a new standard to an artillery unit. As part of the German artillery the Beobachtungs-Abteilungen (artillery observation battalion) were also presented with standards in bright red.



metal fillets. These hollow strips of 1.2cm-thick polished German silver, set lengthways and parallel, vertically encircled the wooden staff at intervals of 7mm, each of the six 1cm-wide fillets being secured to the staff at each end by a single silver screw. For motorised and armoured troops these fillets were positioned 7mm below the Battalion Ring and ran the length of the black wooden staff for 1.05m.

Protective covers

Protective covers in both muslin and artificial leather were provided with all Army standards.

The Führer Escort Command & Battalion

The honour of protecting the person of the Führer, whether on military operations, manoeuvres, when in the field or at the Führer's military headquarters, originally belonged to the Army. Hitler's military bodyguard, the 'Führerbegleitbataillon', was an Army unit furnished on a rotating basis from the battalions of the élite Infanterie-Regiment 'Gross-deutschland'.

Prior to 28 September 1939 the Führer Escort Command (as it was then called) was formed only when the military situation required it. Under the command of Oberst Erwin Rommel – an appointment Hitler made personally – the Escort was

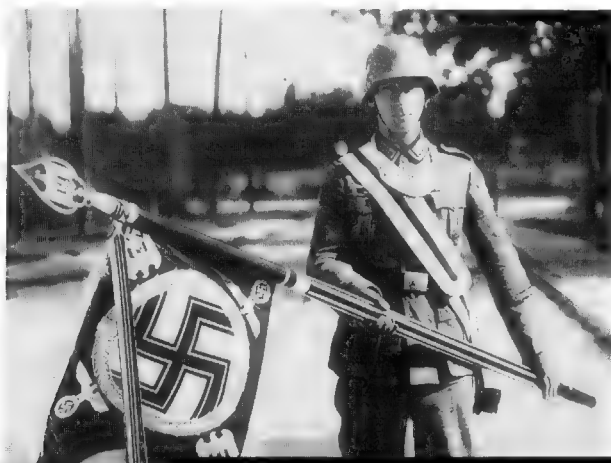
activated to accompany the Führer when he crossed into the Sudetenland in October 1938. Rommel was again in command of the unit when it accompanied Hitler prior to the German entry into Prague on 13 March 1939.

On 23 August 1939 Rommel was promoted to the rank of Generalmajor and posted to the staff of the Führer Headquarters as Commandant, where he was again responsible for Hitler's personal safety and for the security of the Führerhauptquartier. The Escort command was with Hitler when, on 1 September 1939, the Germans marched into Poland. The Führer, Rommel and the Escort Command returned to Berlin on 7 October 1939.

On the field of battle during the Polish campaign Generaloberst Freiherr von Fritsch, the erstwhile commander of the German Army, died. The death of such a senior general in the field had serious consequences, and on the return of the Escort Command from the East it was decided to establish a permanent, full-time Escort Battalion with much wider security responsibilities. On 28 September 1939 Hitler established a permanent Army Escort Battalion, under the direct command of the Führer Headquarters. It was made responsible for the military security of the Führerhauptquartier, charged with the task of protecting the entire headquarters and providing personal protection for all high-ranking officers and personnel of the High Command.

Equipment for the Battalion was plentiful and of high quality. The troops were hand picked, and all received front line combat experience at regular intervals; personnel of the Battalion continued to be rotated within the Infanterie-Regiment 'Gross-deutschland', its parent regiment, thus giving them experience on both the West and East Fronts and the opportunity to distinguish themselves under fire. It was considered a great honour to serve as a member of Escort Battalion.

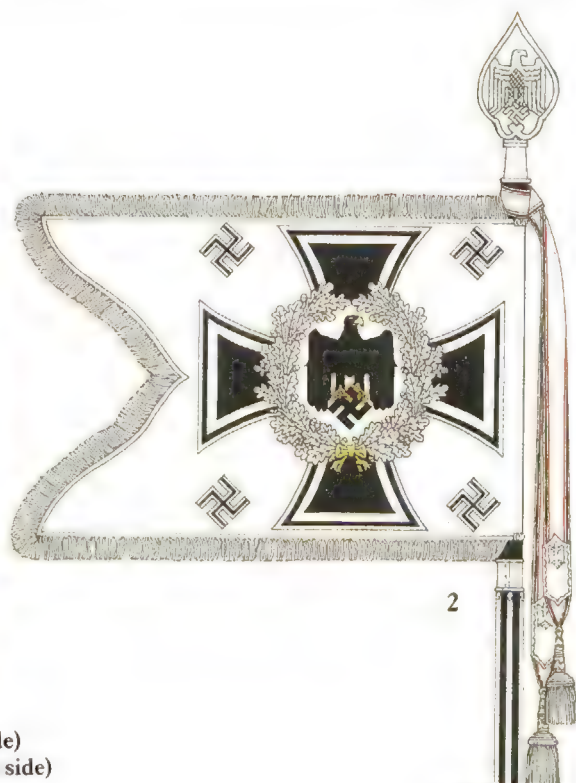
Rommel continued to hold the position of Commandant of the Führerhauptquartier until





1

1: Luftwaffe Signals flag (left side)
2: Tradition flag, II/FJR 1 (right side)



2



3



4

3: State Police flag, I/Regt. 'General Göring' (left side)
4: State Police flag, II & III/Regt. 'GG' & I/FJR 1 (right side)

The Führerbegleitbataillon standard

On 30 September 1939 the Führer Escort Battalion had the distinction of being presented with a standard of a design unique in the German Army (see Plates E1 & E2). At a ceremony held on the parade ground of the Berlin-Reinickendorf barracks of the Regiment 'General Göring', Hitler presented his newly formed permanent Escort Battalion with a Colour having the overall form of an Army standard but which combined on its right side the design of Hitler's own personal standard (the Führerstandarte), with the design and colouring used on Army artillery standards on its left side. The standard consisted of a single piece of flawless hand-woven bright red silk measuring 75cm long by 51cm high. In the fly of the standard-cloth was a 25cm-deep cut-out shaped section – the so-called 'hussar cut' – which ran to a point on the horizontal axis of the central field.



The 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister Kreuz', sometimes referred to as the 'Stalingrad Cross', displayed on the shoulder strap of a Leutnant of Grenadier Regiment 134.

Left side

The details of the design were identical to those used on the left side of Army standards presented to artillery battalions, bright red being the arm-of-service colour for the German artillery. This unique standard was thus an exception to the rule regarding the use of arm-of-service coloured fields for unit flags and standards: the arm-of-service colour appointed for the Escort Battalion was infantry white. It is therefore safe to assume that, rather than have a standard with a different coloured background on either side, the designer chose to use bright red rather than the correct white in order to match the red field of the right (Führerstandarte) side.

All other details of the standard – cloth, staff, finial and ferrule, nails and streamers were as previously described for the cavalry standard.

Right side

In the centre of the bright red field was a large white disc, the edge of which was overlaid with a circular wreath of gold-coloured oak leaves. The wreath was decorated equidistantly at its top, base, left and right sides with a wide band of gold-coloured ribbon. Set square inside the wreath against the white background was a black upright swastika. Edged with a narrow black and white border, the arms of the swastika extended to the inner edge of the oak leaf wreath.

Positioned at each corner of the standard-cloth was a gold-coloured eagle and swastika. The emblem in the upper right corner and the lower left corner was a Wehrmachtadler – the armed forces eagle – and that in the two opposite corners was a gold eagle in the NSDAP political form. The swastikas of all four eagles were positioned away from the centre of the field and the head of each eagle faced to the right as viewed, all of them facing in an anti-clockwise direction.

All other features were as described for the left side.

The SA-Feldherrnhalle standard of Army Infantry Regiment No.271

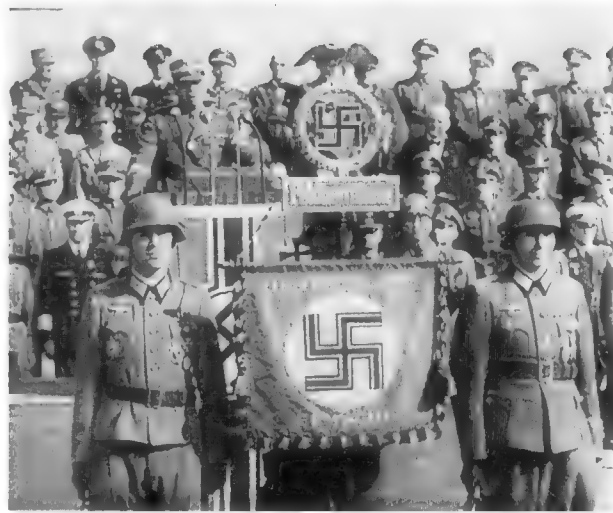
Although it was not an Army emblem the SA-Feldherrnhalle 'Deutschland Erwache' standard (see Plates F1 & F2) was very closely associated with Infantry Regiment 271, with Infantry Battalion 'Feldherrnhalle' and later with Panzer-Grenadier-



The political SA-Feldherrnhalle standard at two separate military parades. The photo on the left shows the front side of the 'Deutschland Erwache' standard; the photo on the

right shows the rear of this standard cloth hung incorrectly, facing the front.

Grenadier-Regiment 'Feldherrnhalle' shared the distinction with



Grenadier-Regiment 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' of being permitted to parade two distinct Colours. The former paraded the political 'Deutschland

Erwache' standard and their own infantry flag; the latter paraded both their infantry flag and the historic Austrian 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' flag.

Division 'Feldherrnhalle'. This political standard was paraded both by Colour parties from these Army units and, during parades for the Army units, by Colour parties made up of members of the SA-Standarte 'Feldherrnhalle'.

The standard (the term referring here to the emblem of this type used by the SA and SS, and not to be confused with the swallow-tailed standards carried in the German Army) consisted of a rectangle of double-sided red material charged on both sides (front and rear) with a swastika design, and hung from a cross-bar suspended from a metal box displaying the name of the unit and fitted to an upright wooden pole, all surmounted by a metal eagle, wreath and swastika. In fact, apart from the name 'Feldherrnhalle' this standard did not differ from the other 'Deutschland Erwache' SA standards presented to the many hundreds of Sturmabteilungen. A detailed description of this type of standard will be found in the forthcoming third book in this series.

Flags of converted former State Police Battalions

In an effort to circumvent the military restrictions imposed by the victorious Allies after the Great War the Germans raised a number of police battalions.

Initially known as 'Landespolizeiabteilungen' or State Police Battalions, and subsequently formed into State Police Groups, these units were eventually to become in all but name the equivalent of Army infantry battalions. They received full military training as well as a wide range of weapons, equipment and vehicles.

Certain of these Police Groups were garrisoned within the Rhineland de-militarised zone; and when, on 7 March 1936, Hitler sent his fledgling armed forces to reoccupy this zone, it was not long before the Police Battalions threw off their disguise and were redesignated as infantry battalions from five army regiments.

Other State Police Groups had been created within the German Reich, a number of which were employed as anti-Communist shock troops under the direct command of Hermann Göring as Prussian Minister of the Interior. After a series of rapid developments in their training, manpower and weaponry these units had been transferred into the Luftwaffe, where they were to evolve into both the Regiment 'General Göring' and a number of parachute battalions (see section below on Luftwaffe flags).

These Landespolizeiabteilungen were all presented with distinctive Colours which they retained even



On the eve of Hitler's 48th birthday Army flags and standards, including a former State Police Group flag, are paraded in Munster. The Landespolizeifahne is probably the flag of III

Battalion, Infantry Regiment 37 stationed at Osnabruck. The flag-bearer wears the former State Police Group 'General Göring' gorget and the carrying sash with its green facing cloth.

after they were converted to Army or Luftwaffe units. The former police flags used by these converted units were of the same design as those described for the I, II, and III Battalions of Regiment 'General Göring' and for I Battalion, Parachute Regiment 1, with the exception of the singular distinction of the 'Southern Cross' emblem. These Army/Police flags also carried Army finials (see Plate A2).

The 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Flag of Grenadier Regiment 134

Following the successful occupation of Austria in March 1938 the Federal Armed Forces of Austria were rapidly absorbed into the Wehrmacht. Shortly after the Anschluss the 44th Infantry Division (a German formation) was raised in Austria from troops of the former Austrian Army. Its home station was at Vienna within Military District XVII, and the division contained three infantry regiments numbered 131, 132 and 134.

Commanded in 1939 by General Albrecht Schubert, the division took part in the Polish campaign, forming part of von Rundstedt's Army Group South (Heeresgruppe Süd). The division was engaged in the 1940 campaign in the West, and was transferred to the Eastern Front in the spring of 1941.

In the invasion of the USSR in June of that year it formed part of III Motorised Army Corps under Panzer Group I, command of the division having passed to General Siebert. In May 1942 the division was fighting in the Caucasus. In mid-November 1942 the division had attached to it the remnants of Grenadier Regiments 534, 535 and 536 from the virtually destroyed 384th, Infantry Division. In December of the same year, as part of the ill-fated Sixth Army, it was encircled by the Russian forces at Stalingrad. January 1943 saw the division's total destruction, the survivors surrendering to the Red Army.

A fresh division was recruited shortly after the Stalingrad disaster, and in June 1943 this formation was honoured with a historic Austrian title as Reichsgrenadier-Division 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister'. The new division was sent in December 1943 to Italy, where it fought with distinction before being transferred to Hungary in February 1945.

After the destruction of the original regiments at Stalingrad, Infantry Regiment 134 of the new division was renamed Grenadier-Regiment 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister'. From 23 March 1944 all members of the regiment as well as the replacement troops and the divisional staff of the Reichsgrenadier-Division 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' were afforded the distinction of wearing a special metal emblem, the Hoch-und Deutschmeister Kreuz – sometimes referred to as the 'Stalingrad Cross' – on the shoulder straps of their uniforms.

In addition the regiment had the unique and much earlier privilege of carrying two different patterns of flags. From the time when the division was first raised Infantry Regiment 134 carried the Colours of the former Austrian unit III Bataillon, 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Regiment Nr.4. These Colours were paraded on festive occasions before the outbreak of the war and at certain selected functions during the war; at other ceremonies the regiment paraded their normal pattern of German Army infantry flag.

The battalion flag was almost, with the exception of its border colouring, identical to the Austrian Imperial Standard. It consisted of a rectangle of yellow material (see Plate E4) charged with an intricate design repeated on both sides and having a broad border.

Obverse side

In the centre of the yellow field was a hand-embroidered and appliqué double-headed black eagle. The eagle of the Empire was displayed with golden beaks, legs and talons, holding in its right talon a golden sceptre and drawn sword (the sword of the Empire) and in its left talon the Imperial orb. Each head was royally crowned. On the eagle's breast was a shield representing the Hapsburg dynasty, Austria and Lorraine. Around the shield were hung two collars. Placed on the wings and tail feathers of the Imperial eagle were eleven crowned escutcheons. The Imperial crown was placed above the crowned heads of the double-headed eagle.

The flag was edged on three sides with a 10cm-wide cloth border in a series of 69 alternating active triangles of black, white and red. (The borders of the former yellow Imperial infantry Colours were made up of triangles in yellow, red, white and black.) The fourth, unbordered side of the flag-cloth was wrapped around the wooden staff and nailed in position with four rows each of 30 gilt-coloured nails, the number of nails being a traditional feature of Imperial Austrian Colours. The individual nails were

equally spaced, and the four rows of nails were set equidistantly. The flag-cloth was reinforced along the four rows of nails by a strip of coloured braided material set between the cloth and the nail heads; two of the strips were in red, the other two in white.

The Reverse side was identical to the obverse.

Staff, finial & ferrule

The staff was made from a single piece of wood, probably seasoned oak. It was painted along its entire length with a series of four-colour bands spiralling diagonally along the staff, in yellow, red, white and black in that order. The staff was slightly conical at its head to accept the finial socket. The finial was in the form of a flat, broad-pointed spearhead without design. The foot of the wooden staff was fitted with a blunt-ended tubular metal ferrule, fastened by screws. No streamers were carried on this particular flag.

KRIEGSMARINE FLAGS

The Reichskriegsflagge (Plate A1) had to be flown from all German warships on a number of selected days during the course of a year regardless of their location, whether on the high seas or in harbour. These were:

- 1 January: New Year's Day
- 18 January: The Day of the Foundation of the German Second Empire, 1871
- 30 January: The Day of National Rising
- 20 April: Hitler's birthday
- 1 May: National Holiday of the German People, Labour Day
- 31 May: 'Anniversary' of the Battle of the Skagerrak (Jutland)

In addition, ships of the German Navy which were in home waters also flew the Reichskriegsflagge on selected days listed below:

- 1 March: The return of the Saarland to Germany
- 29 August: Day of the Foundation of the Prussian

Hitler takes the salute as Austrian troops from the then Infantry Regiment 134 parade the flag of III

Bataillon, 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Regiment Nr. 4; Berlin, 20 April 1938.



also: German Navy, 1859
The first Sunday after Michaelmas,
Thanksgiving Day and Harvest
Festival.

Vessels engaged in a reception for a head of state were required to be dressed overall and to fly the Reichskriegsflagge, in whatever part of the world the occasion took place.

Flags of Navy land units and shore establishments

Unit flags for 'Marine Sections on Land' were bestowed at various times on units from naval artillery battalions, permanent naval cadres, and naval NCO training establishments.

The first naval flag to be presented under the Third Reich to a land-based unit took place during the military ceremony held on the last day of the eighth Party Congress held at Nuremberg 8-14 September 1936. The 2nd Naval Non-

Commissioned Officer Instruction Battalion (2. Marineunteroffizierlehrabteilung) was the first German naval contingent to receive Colours since before the Great War. Other presentations followed until 1939; ten such flags are known to have been presented on various occasions, but it can be seen from the accompanying photograph that more than these ten recorded flags existed.

Naval flags consisted of 126cm square of mid-blue hand-woven pure silk.

Left side

In the centre of the mid-blue cloth was a white disc, the rim overlaid with and encircled by an embroidered garland of gold-coloured oak leaves. Positioned on the white background centrally within the garland was a black swastika with a narrow edging of black and silver, standing on its point and with its lower limb open towards the staff (see Plate F3).

From the four corners of the flag, extending in as



German naval land units parade their flags in Berlin. Seventeen flags can be seen in this photograph being paraded in line abreast.

far as the garland, were four tapering white, gold-edged active wedges. Centred on the outer extremities of these wedges were four emblems, in two sets of matching pairs. In the upper left and lower right corners was an embroidered gold-coloured fouled anchor. In each of the opposite corners was a silver-edged black Iron Cross.

The flag was edged on three sides with a fringe 4.5cm deep formed by double strands of twisted gold threads. The fourth, unfringed side of the cloth had a 20cm-wide selvedge, wrapped around the wooden staff and nailed in position on the left side of the flag by a single row of 74 gilded brass nails driven in at 6mm intervals. To reinforce the flag a 1.2cm-wide ribbon of gold coloured braiding was placed vertically along the flag staff between the nails and the cloth. A further two sets of eight nails each secured the top and bottom edges of the extension to the flag-cloth around the staff. The flag was fixed to the staff immediately below a gilt metal ring positioned just below the finial socket.

Right side

The right side of the naval flag was the same as the left except for the following differences. Within the gold

oak leaf garland and set centrally on the white silk disc was a large black Iron Cross edged in black and silver. The two pairs of matching emblems centred on the outer extremities of the white wedges consisted of the gold-coloured embroidered Wehrmachtadler and the gold-coloured embroidered fouled anchors. The armed forces eagle emblems, with both heads facing the staff, were set in the upper right and lower left corners, the fouled anchors in the lower right and upper left corners.

The vertical axis of each fouled anchor, armed forces eagle and Iron Cross in the corners of both sides of the flag lay on the central axis of the active wedge. The heads of the eagles and the rings at the ends of the anchor shanks were placed farthest from the centre of the flag (see Plate F4).

Staff, finial & furniture

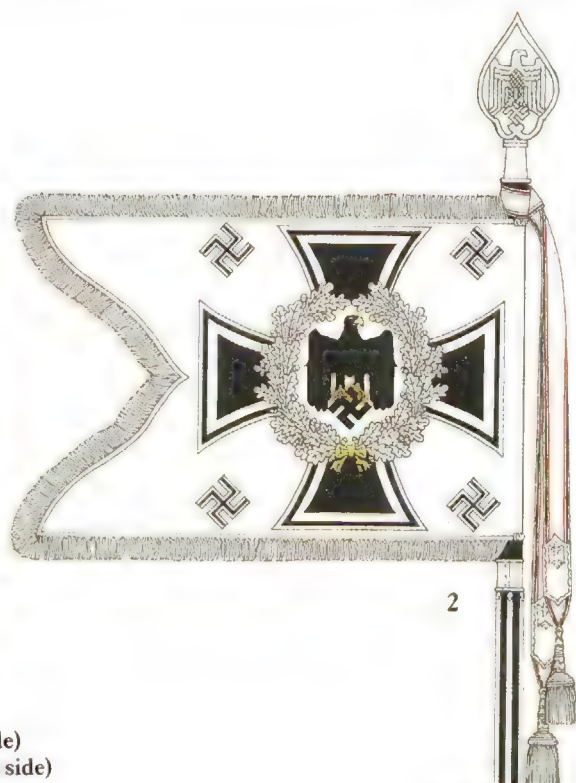
The staff used with Navy flags was very similar in size and appearance to that used with Army flags. For ease of transportation the Navy staff could be unscrewed into two sections; just below the lower edge of the flag cloth, in line with the lower edge of the bottom fringe, was a threaded collar of gilded brass joining the two sections together. Engraved on the upper section of this collar was the designation of the naval unit to which the Colour had been presented. The finial was made of gilded brass. Its overall shape (that of the leaf of the lime tree), design and size were similar to that used on German Army flags and standards. All other metal fittings were as used on Army flags, except that they were in gilded brass rather than silvered metal.

Streamers

The streamer was of the same design, dimensions and colouring as those used on Army flags; however, the metal plaques attached to both ends of the Navy streamer, set 3cm above each tassel, were in matt gold-coloured metal. Their size, design and dates were as described for Army streamer plaques. The shorter length of the Navy streamer bore the plaque dated '16.März 1936', the longer length the plaque dated '16.März 1935'. The reverse side of these plaques were blank other than for the line of oak leaves. Officers commanding naval units were permitted to have engraved on these blank sides important dates in the history of their unit during which the Colours were used.

Generalmajor Helmuth Felmy, Commanding General and Supreme Commander of Air District VII, presenting an Air Force artillery unit with its new flag at the Domplatz, Halberstadt, 1 March 1937.





1: Luftwaffe Signals flag (left side)
2: Tradition flag, II/FJR 1 (right side)



3: State Police flag, I/Regt. 'General Göring' (left side)
4: State Police flag, II & III/Regt. 'GG' & I/FJR 1 (right side)

The Führerbegleitbataillon standard

On 30 September 1939 the Führer Escort Battalion had the distinction of being presented with a standard of a design unique in the German Army (see Plates E1 & E2). At a ceremony held on the parade ground of the Berlin-Reinickendorf barracks of the Regiment 'General Göring', Hitler presented his newly formed permanent Escort Battalion with a Colour having the overall form of an Army standard but which combined on its right side the design of Hitler's own personal standard (the Führerstandarte), with the design and colouring used on Army artillery standards on its left side. The standard consisted of a single piece of flawless hand-woven bright red silk measuring 75cm long by 51cm high. In the fly of the standard-cloth was a 25cm-deep cut-out shaped section – the so-called 'hussar cut' – which ran to a point on the horizontal axis of the central field.



The 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister Kreuz', sometimes referred to as the 'Stalingrad Cross', displayed on the shoulder strap of a Leutnant of Grenadier Regiment 134.

Left side

The details of the design were identical to those used on the left side of Army standards presented to artillery battalions, bright red being the arm-of-service colour for the German artillery. This unique standard was thus an exception to the rule regarding the use of arm-of-service coloured fields for unit flags and standards: the arm-of-service colour appointed for the Escort Battalion was infantry white. It is therefore safe to assume that, rather than have a standard with a different coloured background on either side, the designer chose to use bright red rather than the correct white in order to match the red field of the right (Führerstandarte) side.

All other details of the standard – cloth, staff, finial and ferrule, nails and streamers were as previously described for the cavalry standard.

Right side

In the centre of the bright red field was a large white disc, the edge of which was overlaid with a circular wreath of gold-coloured oak leaves. The wreath was decorated equidistantly at its top, base, left and right sides with a wide band of gold-coloured ribbon. Set square inside the wreath against the white background was a black upright swastika. Edged with a narrow black and white border, the arms of the swastika extended to the inner edge of the oak leaf wreath.

Positioned at each corner of the standard-cloth was a gold-coloured eagle and swastika. The emblem in the upper right corner and the lower left corner was a Wehrmachtadler – the armed forces eagle – and that in the two opposite corners was a gold eagle in the NSDAP political form. The swastikas of all four eagles were positioned away from the centre of the field and the head of each eagle faced to the right as viewed, all of them facing in an anti-clockwise direction.

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The SA-Feldherrnhalle standard of Army Infantry Regiment No.271

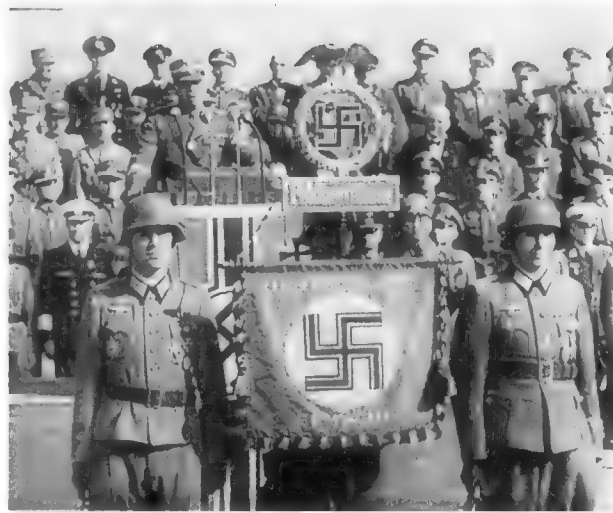
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The political SA-Feldherrnhalle standard at two separate military parades. The photo on the left shows the front side of the 'Deutschland Erwache' standard; the photo on the

right shows the rear of this standard cloth hung incorrectly, facing the front.

Grenadier-Regiment 'Feldherrnhalle' shared the distinction with



Grenadier-Regiment 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' of being permitted to parade two distinct Colours. The former paraded the political 'Deutschland

Erwache' standard and their own infantry flag; the latter paraded both their infantry flag and the historic Austrian 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' flag.

Division 'Feldherrnhalle'. This political standard was paraded both by Colour parties from these Army units and, during parades for the Army units, by Colour parties made up of members of the SA-Standarte 'Feldherrnhalle'.

The standard (the term referring here to the emblem of this type used by the SA and SS, and not to be confused with the swallow-tailed standards carried in the German Army) consisted of a rectangle of double-sided red material charged on both sides (front and rear) with a swastika design, and hung from a cross-bar suspended from a metal box displaying the name of the unit and fitted to an upright wooden pole, all surmounted by a metal eagle, wreath and swastika. In fact, apart from the name 'Feldherrnhalle' this standard did not differ from the other 'Deutschland Erwache' SA standards presented to the many hundreds of Sturmabteilungen. A detailed description of this type of standard will be found in the forthcoming third book in this series.

Flags of converted former State Police Battalions

In an effort to circumvent the military restrictions imposed by the victorious Allies after the Great War the Germans raised a number of police battalions.

Initially known as 'Landespolizeiabteilungen' or State Police Battalions, and subsequently formed into State Police Groups, these units were eventually to become in all but name the equivalent of Army infantry battalions. They received full military training as well as a wide range of weapons, equipment and vehicles.

Certain of these Police Groups were garrisoned within the Rhineland de-militarised zone; and when, on 7 March 1936, Hitler sent his fledgling armed forces to reoccupy this zone, it was not long before the Police Battalions threw off their disguise and were redesignated as infantry battalions from five army regiments.

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These Landespolizeiabteilungen were all presented with distinctive Colours which they retained even



On the eve of Hitler's 48th birthday Army flags and standards, including a former State Police Group flag, are paraded in Munster. The Landespolizeifahne is probably the flag of III

Battalion, Infantry Regiment 37 stationed at Osnabruck. The flag-bearer wears the former State Police Group 'General Göring' gorget and the carrying sash with its green facing cloth.

after they were converted to Army or Luftwaffe units. The former police flags used by these converted units were of the same design as those described for the I, II, and III Battalions of Regiment 'General Göring' and for I Battalion, Parachute Regiment 1, with the exception of the singular distinction of the 'Southern Cross' emblem. These Army/Police flags also carried Army finials (see Plate A2).

The 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Flag of Grenadier Regiment 134

Following the successful occupation of Austria in March 1938 the Federal Armed Forces of Austria were rapidly absorbed into the Wehrmacht. Shortly after the Anschluss the 44th Infantry Division (a German formation) was raised in Austria from troops of the former Austrian Army. Its home station was at Vienna within Military District XVII, and the division contained three infantry regiments numbered 131, 132 and 134.

Commanded in 1939 by General Albrecht Schubert, the division took part in the Polish campaign, forming part of von Rundstedt's Army Group South (Heeresgruppe Süd). The division was engaged in the 1940 campaign in the West, and was transferred to the Eastern Front in the spring of 1941.

In the invasion of the USSR in June of that year it formed part of III Motorised Army Corps under Panzer Group I, command of the division having passed to General Siebert. In May 1942 the division was fighting in the Caucasus. In mid-November 1942 the division had attached to it the remnants of Grenadier Regiments 534, 535 and 536 from the virtually destroyed 384th, Infantry Division. In December of the same year, as part of the ill-fated Sixth Army, it was encircled by the Russian forces at Stalingrad. January 1943 saw the division's total destruction, the survivors surrendering to the Red Army.

A fresh division was recruited shortly after the Stalingrad disaster, and in June 1943 this formation was honoured with a historic Austrian title as Reichsgrenadier-Division 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister'. The new division was sent in December 1943 to Italy, where it fought with distinction before being transferred to Hungary in February 1945.

After the destruction of the original regiments at Stalingrad, Infantry Regiment 134 of the new division was renamed Grenadier-Regiment 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister'. From 23 March 1944 all members of the regiment as well as the replacement troops and the divisional staff of the Reichsgrenadier-Division 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' were afforded the distinction of wearing a special metal emblem, the Hoch-und Deutschmeister Kreuz – sometimes referred to as the 'Stalingrad Cross' – on the shoulder straps of their uniforms.

In addition the regiment had the unique and much earlier privilege of carrying two different patterns of flags. From the time when the division was first raised Infantry Regiment 134 carried the Colours of the former Austrian unit III Bataillon, 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Regiment Nr.4. These Colours were paraded on festive occasions before the outbreak of the war and at certain selected functions during the war; at other ceremonies the regiment paraded their normal pattern of German Army infantry flag.

The battalion flag was almost, with the exception of its border colouring, identical to the Austrian Imperial Standard. It consisted of a rectangle of yellow material (see Plate E4) charged with an intricate design repeated on both sides and having a broad border.

Obverse side

In the centre of the yellow field was a hand-embroidered and appliqué double-headed black eagle. The eagle of the Empire was displayed with golden beaks, legs and talons, holding in its right talon a golden sceptre and drawn sword (the sword of the Empire) and in its left talon the Imperial orb. Each head was royally crowned. On the eagle's breast was a shield representing the Hapsburg dynasty, Austria and Lorraine. Around the shield were hung two collars. Placed on the wings and tail feathers of the Imperial eagle were eleven crowned escutcheons. The Imperial crown was placed above the crowned heads of the double-headed eagle.

The flag was edged on three sides with a 10cm-wide cloth border in a series of 69 alternating active triangles of black, white and red. (The borders of the former yellow Imperial infantry Colours were made up of triangles in yellow, red, white and black.) The fourth, unbordered side of the flag-cloth was wrapped around the wooden staff and nailed in position with four rows each of 30 gilt-coloured nails, the number of nails being a traditional feature of Imperial Austrian Colours. The individual nails were

equally spaced, and the four rows of nails were set equidistantly. The flag-cloth was reinforced along the four rows of nails by a strip of coloured braided material set between the cloth and the nail heads; two of the strips were in red, the other two in white.

The Reverse side was identical to the obverse.

Staff, finial & ferrule

The staff was made from a single piece of wood, probably seasoned oak. It was painted along its entire length with a series of four-colour bands spiralling diagonally along the staff, in yellow, red, white and black in that order. The staff was slightly conical at its head to accept the finial socket. The finial was in the form of a flat, broad-pointed spearhead without design. The foot of the wooden staff was fitted with a blunt-ended tubular metal ferrule, fastened by screws. No streamers were carried on this particular flag.

KRIEGSMARINE FLAGS

The Reichskriegsflagge (Plate A1) had to be flown from all German warships on a number of selected days during the course of a year regardless of their location, whether on the high seas or in harbour. These were:

- 1 January: New Year's Day
- 18 January: The Day of the Foundation of the German Second Empire, 1871
- 30 January: The Day of National Rising
- 20 April: Hitler's birthday
- 1 May: National Holiday of the German People, Labour Day
- 31 May: 'Anniversary' of the Battle of the Skagerrak (Jutland)

In addition, ships of the German Navy which were in home waters also flew the Reichskriegsflagge on selected days listed below:

- 1 March: The return of the Saarland to Germany
- 29 August: Day of the Foundation of the Prussian

Hitler takes the salute as Austrian troops from the then Infantry Regiment 134 parade the flag of III

Bataillon, 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Regiment Nr. 4; Berlin, 20 April 1938.



also: German Navy, 1859
The first Sunday after Michaelmas,
Thanksgiving Day and Harvest
Festival.

Vessels engaged in a reception for a head of state were required to be dressed overall and to fly the Reichskriegsflagge, in whatever part of the world the occasion took place.

Flags of Navy land units and shore establishments

Unit flags for 'Marine Sections on Land' were bestowed at various times on units from naval artillery battalions, permanent naval cadres, and naval NCO training establishments.

The first naval flag to be presented under the Third Reich to a land-based unit took place during the military ceremony held on the last day of the eighth Party Congress held at Nuremberg 8-14 September 1936. The 2nd Naval Non-

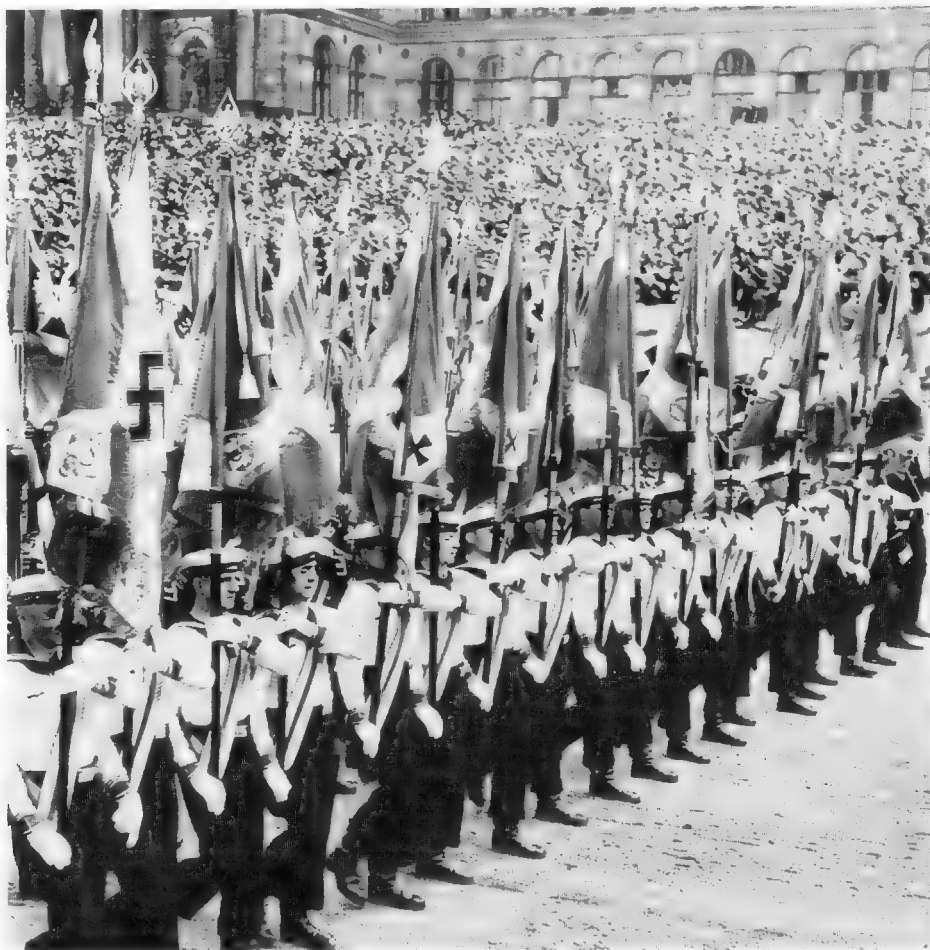
Commissioned Officer Instruction Battalion (2. Marineunteroffizierlehrabteilung) was the first German naval contingent to receive Colours since before the Great War. Other presentations followed until 1939; ten such flags are known to have been presented on various occasions, but it can be seen from the accompanying photograph that more than these ten recorded flags existed.

Naval flags consisted of 126cm square of mid-blue hand-woven pure silk.

Left side

In the centre of the mid-blue cloth was a white disc, the rim overlaid with and encircled by an embroidered garland of gold-coloured oak leaves. Positioned on the white background centrally within the garland was a black swastika with a narrow edging of black and silver, standing on its point and with its lower limb open towards the staff (see Plate F3).

From the four corners of the flag, extending in as



German naval land units parade their flags in Berlin. Seventeen flags can be seen in this photograph being paraded in line abreast.

far as the garland, were four tapering white, gold-edged active wedges. Centred on the outer extremities of these wedges were four emblems, in two sets of matching pairs. In the upper left and lower right corners was an embroidered gold-coloured fouled anchor. In each of the opposite corners was a silver-edged black Iron Cross.

The flag was edged on three sides with a fringe 4.5cm deep formed by double strands of twisted gold threads. The fourth, unfringed side of the cloth had a 20cm-wide selvedge, wrapped around the wooden staff and nailed in position on the left side of the flag by a single row of 74 gilded brass nails driven in at 6mm intervals. To reinforce the flag a 1.2cm-wide ribbon of gold coloured braiding was placed vertically along the flag staff between the nails and the cloth. A further two sets of eight nails each secured the top and bottom edges of the extension to the flag-cloth around the staff. The flag was fixed to the staff immediately below a gilt metal ring positioned just below the finial socket.

Right side

The right side of the naval flag was the same as the left except for the following differences. Within the gold

oak leaf garland and set centrally on the white silk disc was a large black Iron Cross edged in black and silver. The two pairs of matching emblems centred on the outer extremities of the white wedges consisted of the gold-coloured embroidered Wehrmachtadler and the gold-coloured embroidered fouled anchors. The armed forces eagle emblems, with both heads facing the staff, were set in the upper right and lower left corners, the fouled anchors in the lower right and upper left corners.

The vertical axis of each fouled anchor, armed forces eagle and Iron Cross in the corners of both sides of the flag lay on the central axis of the active wedge. The heads of the eagles and the rings at the ends of the anchor shanks were placed farthest from the centre of the flag (see Plate F4).

Staff, finial & furniture

The staff used with Navy flags was very similar in size and appearance to that used with Army flags. For ease of transportation the Navy staff could be unscrewed into two sections; just below the lower edge of the flag cloth, in line with the lower edge of the bottom fringe, was a threaded collar of gilded brass joining the two sections together. Engraved on the upper section of this collar was the designation of the naval unit to which the Colour had been presented. The finial was made of gilded brass. Its overall shape (that of the leaf of the lime tree), design and size were similar to that used on German Army flags and standards. All other metal fittings were as used on Army flags, except that they were in gilded brass rather than silvered metal.

Streamers

The streamer was of the same design, dimensions and colouring as those used on Army flags; however, the metal plaques attached to both ends of the Navy streamer, set 3cm above each tassel, were in matt gold-coloured metal. Their size, design and dates were as described for Army streamer plaques. The shorter length of the Navy streamer bore the plaque dated '16.März 1936', the longer length the plaque dated '16.März 1935'. The reverse side of these plaques were blank other than for the line of oak leaves. Officers commanding naval units were permitted to have engraved on these blank sides important dates in the history of their unit during which the Colours were used.

Generalmajor Helmuth Felmy, Commanding General and Supreme Commander of Air District VII, presenting an Air Force artillery unit with its new flag at the Domplatz, Halberstadt, 1 March 1937.



Protective covers

The supply of flags for presentation to shore-based naval units was the responsibility of the Naval High Command. Instructions were issued to all units with flags as to their care, maintenance and handling after use. The flag was never to be rolled up whilst damp, and had to be hung out in a horizontal position to dry. The wooden staff and in particular the metal fittings had to be carefully dried with a woollen cloth. Under no circumstances were the metal parts to be cleaned with a metal polish or abrasive cloth. To protect the fabric of the flag when not in use or during transportation a special cover was provided made of black waxed cloth. In addition to this a further cover made of plain white cretonne was also supplied.

LUFTWAFFE FLAGS

Flags were presented to units of the German Air Force, other than the Fallschirmjäger troops mentioned elsewhere in this book, in three basic field colours: gold-yellow for Luftwaffe flying units, technical and aerial warfare schools; bright red for Luftwaffe anti-aircraft artillery units and schools; and gold-brown for Luftwaffe signals units and schools (see Plates G3 & H1).

The flag consisted of a piece of silk measuring 126cm square in the appropriate colour.

Left side

In the centre of the flag was a disc of pure white, hand-woven silk, the edge of which was overlaid with an embroidered garland of silver-coloured oak leaves and acorns. The garland was gathered (not tied) at its base by two lengths of silver-coloured ribbon. Set centrally within the garland was an Iron Cross of black silk, edged with silver aluminium braiding. This emblem did not display either the customary swastika or a date.

From the four corners of the flag extending in to the oak leaf garland were four white, tapering, black-



Left: Luftwaffe Colour-bearer, Jagdgeschwader 27; North Africa, 1941.



A Luftwaffe unit parading with its Colour.

edged inactive wedges. Lying on the central axis of the outer extremities of each of these wedges was a silver-edged black swastika, similar to those used on Army flags, but for the Luftwaffe set square within each of the right-angled corners of the flag.

The flag-cloth was bordered on three sides with a fringe 4.5cm deep formed by double strands of twisted silver aluminium threads.

Right side

The right side duplicated the left side, except for the central design. The edge of the central white disc was overlaid and completely encircled by a garland of silver-coloured laurel leaves with berries. The base of the garland was gathered, not tied, by two lengths of silver-coloured ribbon. Set against the white silk background inside the garland was a silver-coloured embroidered Luftwaffe emblem of an eagle in flight clutching in its talon a silver swastika. The head of the

eagle faced towards the staff; the swastika stood on its point; and the tips of the eagle's wing feathers overlaid the laurel garland and were extended onto the coloured field of the flag-cloth (see Plate G4).

The cloth was fastened to the staff by being nailed along the right side, the opposite side to that used on Army Colours. In all other respects the black wooden staff (with the obvious exception of the finial), its size and physical shape, its silver-coloured alloy fittings and furniture, the number and positioning of the nails, were the same as those employed for Army flags.

Finial & streamers

The finial was cast in one piece from silver-coloured 'Hellumium' metal alloy. Unlike the Army and Navy, the Air Force finial took the 'sculptured' form of an eagle in flight with outstretched wings and clutching in its talon a small silver swastika resting in the angle formed by two small sprigs of silver-coloured alloy oak leaves. The eagle emblem was three dimensional and was fixed to the head of the staff so that it faced to the front, away from the flag.

The streamers tied to Air Force flags were of the same dimensions and colouring as those described for Army flags; however, Luftwaffe streamers did not carry the metal plaques displayed on the ends of Army streamers.

Protective covers

To protect the fabric of a Luftwaffe flag when not in use or during transportation a specially designed waterproof cylindrical cover was provided. Made from black-coloured waxed cloth, 186cm high and with an approximate width of 26–28cm, it was edged in leather and secured at its base with a strap and buckle. Due to the difficult shape of the finial the Luftwaffe eagle was separately capped with a specially shaped black leather covering. For the flag-cloth itself a white muslin cover with seven fastening tapes was provided.

A short-lived ceremonial practice was introduced on certain Luftwaffe airfields in the Eastern occupied areas whereby the unit flag was positioned at the edge of the runway, presumably with the intention of

inspiring the aircrews when taking off on their missions. Exactly when this practice was introduced and for how long it continued is not known.



Police Colours

As described above (Army Standards/converted former State Police Battalions), a number of Colours originally presented to former Landespolizei-abteilungen were retained when these semi-clandestine infantry units were converted into Army and Air Force units. In the latter case the relevant units were I, II and III Battalions of the Regiment 'General Göring', and I Battalion, Parachute Regiment 1. Each of these Colours consisted of a single piece of hand-woven dark green pure silk measuring 126cm square (see Plate H3).

Left side

In the centre of the flag was a disc of white hand-woven silk, the edge overlaid with an embroidered garland of silver-coloured laurel leaves and berries. The laurel branches were crossed at the top of the garland, and at its base the garland was secured with a length of silver-coloured ribbon tied to form an ornate bow.

Set centrally within the wreath was a black Imperial Prussian eagle, wings outstretched, facing the flag staff, clutching in its right talon a bundle of three bolts of lightning and in its left an unsheathed upright sword. The feather details of this jet-black eagle were picked out in dark and light brown silks; the eagle had a bright yellow beak, legs and talons; its tongue was bright red and its eye light grey. The lightning bolts, sword hilt and cross-guard were bright yellow, the blade of the sword silver. Displayed above the eagle inside the garland was a dark green riband bearing the Latin motto 'Pro Gloria et Patria' (For Glory and Fatherland); the letters were in silver, as was the narrow edging to the riband.

Placed behind the central wreath were the arms of a large white silk swastika positioned on its point. The lower limb was open towards the staff, and the whole faced in a clock-wise direction. The foreshortened arms of the swastika almost reached to each of the four edges of the flag-cloth.

In each of the four corners of the flag was a representation of a flaming grenade in silver-white silk; the flames pointed towards the centre of the flag.

The cloth was edged on three sides with a double sewn-on fringed border of silver aluminium twisted threads 4.5cm deep. The fourth side had an extra



A permanent guard company, supplied on a rotating basis from Regiment 'General

Göring', was based at Karinhall, Göring's private residence near Berlin.

20cm selvedge which was wrapped around the wooden flag staff and nailed in position on the left side of the flag. The flag-cloth was reinforced by a strip of silver aluminium braid 1.2cm wide set between the cloth and the nail heads.

The flag carried by I Battalion, Regiment 'General Göring' had as a distinction the 'Southern Cross' emblem set just below the ribbon at the base of the wreath of laurel leaves (see commentary to Plate H3).

Right side

The right side of the flag was identical to the left side. The Imperial Prussian eagle faced towards the staff and the swastika was positioned in a clockwise direction. No nails appeared down the flag-cloth on the right side.

Staff, fittings, finial & streamers

The wooden staff used with the flags of all State Police Battalions was similar in size, colour, finish and fittings to those used with Army and Air Force flags. The finial on the flags originally carried by the various State Police Battalions consisted of a silver-metal, pointed frame containing the Prussian Police star emblem into which was set a small swastika. This finial continued to be used on the flag carried by I Battalion, Regiment 'General Göring' (see Plate H3) and I Battalion, Parachute Regiment 1. The finial used on the State Police Colours carried by the other

two battalions of Regiment 'General Göring' were of the normal Luftwaffe pattern, as previously described (see Plate H4).

The streamers used on the State Police Colours was the same for all units, whether Army, Air Force or Paratroops. They consisted of a 4.6cm-wide ribbon of silver aluminium braid with a narrow central band and narrow edging of dark green silk. Each streamer was 1.72 metres in length and was finished at both ends with a silver and dark green patterned tassel. Unlike the Army and Navy streamers but in keeping with those used on Air Force flags, these State Police streamers did not display any form of plaque.

THE LEGION CONDOR

The German military assistance rendered to General Franco during the Spanish Civil War was in the main an air force effort. Officially known as the 'Legion Condor' and occasionally referred to as the 'German Volunteer Corps', squadrons of bombers, fighters and reconnaissance aircraft together with ground crews, machine shops, air signals formations, anti-aircraft artillery and light flak batteries as well as a command staff, served in Spain from the start of the war in July 1936 until the Nationalist victory on 2 April 1939.

Throughout its time in Spain the Legion did not possess any form of distinctive flag. Prior to their final departure for Germany, General Franco presented a special Colour to the Legion Condor during the Spanish Air Force parade held at Barajas in April 1939. Referred to as an 'Ehrenstandarte' or Honour Standard, this Colour was made in Spain for the Legion. When the volunteers returned to Germany in May 1939 the Ehrenstandarte went with them. It had previously been carried during the victory parade held in Madrid on 19 May 1939, and at the final parade for the Legion in Spain at Leon on 23 May. In Germany it was used for the official reception in Hamburg on 31 May, and was carried at the head of the Legion during the 'Parade of Honour' – the final Legion Condor parade – held in Berlin on 6 June 1939. After this final parade the Legion was officially

disbanded, and the Honour Standard was initially placed in the Ehrenmal in the Unter den Linden in Berlin. On 8 June 1939 the Honour Standard was carried by an honour guard company to the German Air Ministry building, where it was laid up in the 'Standards Hall'.

When Berlin fell to the Red Army in May 1945 this standard, along with many other Colours and other items of war booty, was taken by the Russians to Moscow, where it was put on display in what was then the Central Museum of the Soviet Army but was subsequently renamed the Central Museum of the USSR Armed Forces. It is presumed to be there still.

The Legion Condor Honour Standard

The Spanish colours of bright red and gold-yellow understandably predominate in the design of this standard (see Plates G1 & G2). There were, however, a number of features unique in German flag design.

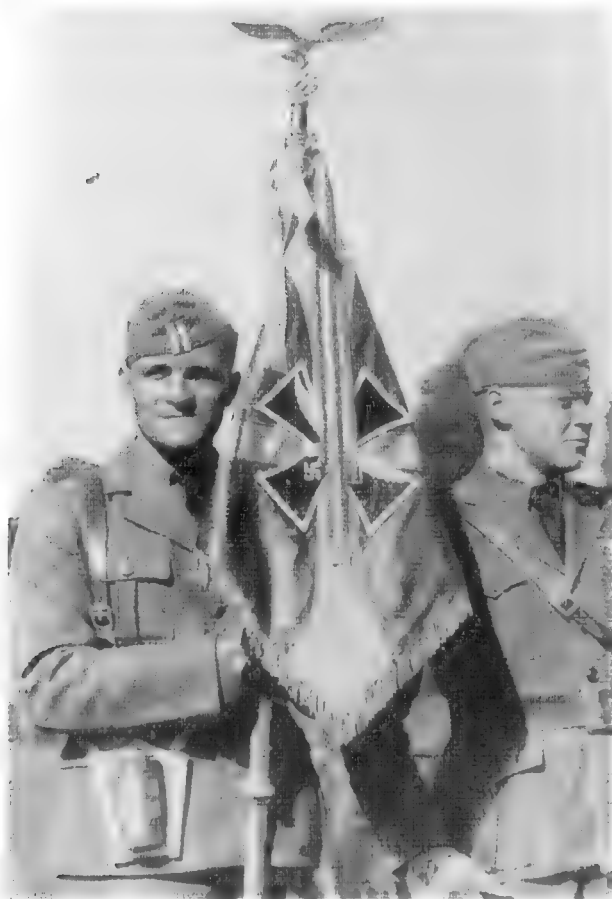
Left side

The left side of the standard, the overall dimensions of which were 53cm wide by 52cm deep, showed a silver-edged black Iron Cross superimposed centrally on a gold-yellow diagonal cross, all on a bright red silk field. The arms of this cross, which widened towards the corners of the cloth, were edged with a narrow black cording laid alongside narrow gold piping. Overlaying the centre of the Iron Cross was a silver Luftwaffe eagle and swastika.

In the four corners of the standard and positioned centrally on the extremities of the arms of the gold-yellow diagonal cross were four different emblems. Clockwise from the top left corner these were a silver Luftwaffe eagle and swastika; the 1938 pattern of the Arms of Spain in miniature; silver-coloured block letters 'L.C.' edged with a fine black outline (for 'Legion Condor'); and the Falange emblem in bright red – five arrows passing through a yoke.

Right side

The right side of the Ehrenstandarte, which was identical to a Spanish regimental flag, displayed the national colours in horizontal bars of red over yellow over red. Set in the centre were the arms of Spain introduced by Franco in spring 1938 and patterned on the Spanish arms dating from the 16th century.



Staff, finial & ferrule

The 3.5cm-deep fringe bordering three sides of the standard was in gold-yellow. The standard was fixed to a light brown polished wooden staff by a series of five loops, each 6cm wide, placed equidistantly along the hoist edge of the cloth, with the topmost loop fastened to the staff by a yellow cord tied through a small ring fixture.

The staff was surmounted by a bronzed metal Luftwaffe eagle in flight 12.5cm high and 24cm wide and clutching in one talon a bronze swastika, all resting on two short sprigs of oak leaves crossed at their base. The base of the staff was capped with a polished ball-shaped white-metal ferrule. The staff consisted of two equal-length parts jointed together by a polished white-metal 'knuckle' positioned half way along its 2m length.

Streamers

Tied in a large bow just below the staff top and fastened with yellow cords were two sets of streamers.



The Legion Condor Ehrenstandarte photographed on the day it was presented by Generalissimo Franco to

the German volunteers during a special parade at Barajas, Spain, April 1939. Note the streamers, and the carrying sash.

One streamer, tied to give two lengths 59cm and 47cm long, represented the Nationalist colours of Spain of red, yellow and red in equal parts; the ends each had a gold fringe 35mm deep. The second streamer was in fact a length of medal ribbon as worn with the Spanish Military Medal. In white with narrow yellow edges and a central band of yellow edged along both sides in red, this was tied to give two lengths, one 26cm and the other 28cm long. The longer end had a gold fringe 28mm deep; suspended from the shorter end was the Spanish Military Medal in silver.

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THE PLATES

A1: The Reichskriegsflagge

The National War Flag was introduced on 7 November 1935 to be used by all three branches of the German armed forces. In practice it was most frequently used by the German Navy, being flown at the stern of all surface vessels. The Reichskriegsflagge replaced the earlier black, white and red National War Flag with its large central Iron Cross, as used between 1933 and 1935.

A2: Flag of State Police Group ‘General Göring’

The flag is paraded by an Army NCO from II Battalion, Infantry Regiment No. 37. There were several Army infantry battalions which had developed from earlier State Police detachments that had, before 7 March 1936, been garrisoned in the demilitarised Rhineland zone. When the German forces

reoccupied the Rhineland these State Police Groups were converted into infantry battalions, and in recognition of their former role they were permitted to retain their original State Police Group flags. However, the finials used with these flags were of the regular Army design (see also Plates H3 & H4).

B1: Army infantry battalion flag (left side)

The field is in white, appointed as the arm-of-service colour for the German infantry. Detailed descriptions of the different elements of Army flags can be found in the body text. The planned commemorative streamer for the German entry into Austria on 13 March 1938 has been shown here attached to the staff just below the finial; in fact these commemorative streamers (the other three are shown on Plates E3, F3 & G3) were never actually awarded, although detailed instructions had been set out as to their appearance and issue.

B2: Army engineer battalion flag (right side)

Black was the arm-of-service colour allocated to the engineer (Pionier) branch of the German Army. The elements of the flag design are described in the body text.

B3: Army rifle battalion flag (left side)

The arm-of-service colour for rifle battalions (Jäger-Bataillonen) and battalions of mountain infantry regiments (Gebirgsjäger Regiment) was green.

Before 1939, for the purpose of perpetuating the traditions of pre-First World War Jäger battalions, certain rifle battalions from a number of selected infantry regiments were chosen to carry the tradition title of ‘Jäger-Bataillon’. By 1939 these were:

I. (Jäger)/Infanterie-Regiment 2 (garrisoned at Allenstein)

II. (Jäger)/Infanterie-Regiment 4 (Kolberg)

I. (Jäger)/Infanterie-Regiment 10 (Dresden)

III. (Jäger)/Infanterie-Regiment 15 (Kassel). In 1937 Infantry Regiment 15 had been converted to a motorised regiment, forming part of the motorised 29th Infantry Division.

III. (Jäger)/Infanterie-Regiment 17 (Goslar)

III. (Jäger)/Infanterie-Regiment 83 (Hirschberg)

Jäger Regiments were first formed during the war. Gebirgsjäger regiments were rifle regiments within mountain infantry divisions.

B4: III (Jäger) Btl., Infanterie-Regiment 92 (left side)

In November 1941 it was announced by the High Command of the German Army (ref: Heeresmitteilung 1941, Order No. 1218) that, in order to strengthen the traditional links with the Finnish army, III Battalion of Infantry Regiment 92 had been chosen to carry the title 'III.(Jäger) Bataillon 92. Infanterie-Regiment (Jäger-Bataillon Finnland)'; and that they were to become the holders of the First World War traditions of the former Royal Prussian Reserve Jäger Battalion No. 27 – Finnischen Jäger Bataillon 27 (Königliches Preussisches Reserve-Jäger-Bataillon Nr. 27). Illustrated here is the left side of the unit's special tradition flag, as described in detail in the body text.

C1: Army cavalry regiment standard (left side)

Details of this and all other Army standards can be found in the body text. All units appointed to carry a standard were presented with a Colour that was identical in every feature other than the background colours of the field, in this case gold-yellow. These background colours varied in accordance with the Waffensfarbe appointed to each branch of the German Army.

C2: Army armoured battalion standard (right side)

The right side of the pink standard carried by armoured battalions of armoured regiments, anti-tank battalions and armoured schools.

C3: Army motorised engineer battalion standard (left side)

C4: Army transport/supply battalion standard (right side)

D1: Army motorised rifle battalion standard (left side)

D2: Army chemical warfare (Smoke Troops) battalion standard (right side)

D3: Army motorcycle battalion standard (right side)

The grass green standard thought to have been



A phalanx of Luftwaffe flags, including battalion flags of the Regiment

'General Göring', paraded outside the German Air Ministry in Berlin.

presented to pre-war lorried rifle battalions and motor-cycle battalions.

D4: Army reconnaissance battalion standard (left side)

The copper brown standard assumed to have been presented to pre-war Army reconnaissance battalions.

E1: Army artillery battalion standard (left side)

This illustrates the left side of the standard presented to the Führerbegleitbataillon. Descriptive details of this standard can be found in the body text.

E2: Führerbegleitbataillon standard (right side)

As pointed out in the body text, the design for this side of the standard was based on the design used for the Führerstandarte. However, it is of interest that the oak leaves forming the wreath in the centre lay in the opposite direction to those found on the Führerstandarte.

E3: Army signals battalion standard (left side)

E4: 'Hoch-und Deutschmeister' Colour, for Grenadier-Regiment 134 (obverse)

The circumstances of this flag's award as an extra ceremonial Colour, and a detailed description, are given in the body text.

F1, F2: Feldzeichen, SA-Standarte 'Feldherrnhalle' (front & rear)

Descriptive details, and the association of this standard with Infantry Regiment 271, will be found covered in the body text.

F3: Navy land units flag (left side)

The left side of the flag for all naval land units and shore-based establishments is shown here, with the planned but unissued commemorative streamer for a naval formation which took part in the occupation of Memel, 22 March 1939.

F4: Navy land units flag (right side)

Descriptive details of both sides of this flag can be found in the text. The German Navy made scant use of colours to differentiate between the branches of their service; the blue field was chosen, regardless of branch, as being universally appropriate for naval flags.

G1, G2: Legion Condor Honour Standard (left & right sides)

A detailed description of this standard, and the circumstances of its award, is found in the body text.

G3: Luftwaffe anti-aircraft artillery battalion flag (left side)

The flag for Flak battalions and schools is illustrated here with the planned but unissued streamer for the occupation of the Sudetenland, 1 October 1938. Like Army artillery, Air Force artillery used bright red *Waffenfarbe*.

G4: Luftwaffe flag for flying units (right side)

The right side of the flag for flying units, technical and aerial warfare schools of the German Air Force; gold-yellow was the branch colour appointed for all these types of unit.

H1: Luftwaffe flag for signals units (left side)

Gold-brown was the colour used by Luftwaffe signals units and schools.

H2: Tradition standard, II Bataillon, Fallschirmjäger-Regiment Nr. 1 (right side)

The right side of the white Army standard for motorised infantry battalions. Apart from the name engraved on the 'battalion ring' it was identical in design to all other standards used by the various Army formations – described in detail in the body text under the section on cavalry standards. It is shown here in the section of the colour plates devoted to the German Air Force because one such Army motorised standard was carried as a Tradition Colour by II Battalion, Parachute Regiment No. 1.

The year 1936 saw the formation of a German Army parachute unit organised at the newly formed experimental parachute school at Stendal airfield, 60 miles west of Berlin. The unit, consisting entirely of volunteers drawn from the Army, was designated 'Heavy Parachute Infantry Company', and was equipped with heavy machine guns and heavy mortars. In spring 1938 the Parachute Infantry Company, under Major Richard Heidrich, was reorganised and expanded to battalion strength. Major Heidrich, who had been transferred to Stendal from the Potsdam War College where he had served as a tactics instructor, subsequently became the first commander of the Army parachute battalion.

On 4 November 1938 the Fallschirm-Infanterie-Bataillon moved into the newly constructed Roselie Kaserne barracks in Brunswick. On the same day the Inspector of Infantry, Generalmajor Ott, presented the battalion with an Army Colour, and bestowed on the unit the traditions of the former First World War Assault Battalion No. 7 (*Sturmbataillon Nr. 7*).

With the separate development of the parachute arm of the German Luftwaffe it became increasingly obvious that it was impracticable to have two duplicated parachute organisations supported and supplied by two branches of the armed forces. IV (*Fallschirmschützen*) Bataillon had been detached from the Luftwaffe's Regiment 'General Göring', and on 1 April 1938 had been posted to Stendal where it became I Battalion, Parachute Regiment No. 1, making up almost the entire complement of para-troop personnel at the School. As the Luftwaffe was

The former State Police Group flag being paraded by I Bataillon, Fallschirmjäger-Regiment Nr. 1.



the force which had control of the aircraft, it was decided (at the insistence of Hermann Göring) that all parachute troops were to be brought under Air Force command. Thus it was that on 1 January 1939 the army Parachute Infantry Battalion, 'das Bataillon Heidrich', was absorbed into the Luftwaffe, losing its identity as an Army unit and becoming II Battalion, Parachute Regiment No. 1.

The motorised infantry standard first presented to the unit in November 1938 when it formed part of the Army was retained after its absorption into the Luftwaffe as a Tradition Colour.

H3: Flag of I Bataillon, Regiment 'General Göring' (left side)

The left side of the State Police Group 'General Göring' flag for I Battalion, Regiment 'General Göring'. In accordance with the Führer decree of 21 April 1936 (relating to the presentation of new unit flags and standards) all Luftwaffe units were to receive flags with the exception of Regiment 'General Göring', whose battalions were instructed to retain their former State Police flags.

The design of the flag for I Battalion, Regiment 'General Göring' was identical to all the other State Police Group 'General Göring' flags (described in the body text), with the single distinction of the 'Southern Cross' emblem borne as a small shield at the base of the laurel wreath. It also continued to display the Prussian Police finial previously used with the State

Police Group 'General Göring' flags. (Further details of these police flags will be found in the forthcoming third book in this series).

The emblem, the 'Ost-Afrika Kreuz des Südens (Kolonial Polizeiabzeichen)' was added to the flag presented to the Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring' on 28 May 1934 when this police unit took over the traditions of the former German East African Colonial Police troop. The State Police Group retained the tradition until 1938 when, as Regiment 'General Göring', the former State Police unit passed the tradition to the Protection Police (Schutzpolizei) of Greater Berlin. However, they retained the 'Southern Cross' emblem for use on the flag, which eventually became the tradition flag for I Battalion, Regiment 'General Göring'. The emblem consisted of a small, black-edged, white shield quartered by a black cross. The upper left canton contained a red field on which was displayed an arrangement of five white stars representing the Southern Cross constellation.

H4: Flag of II Bataillon, Regiment 'General Göring' (right side)

The right side of the State Police Group 'General Göring' flag for II and III Battalions, Regiment 'General Göring', and I Battalion, Parachute Regiment No. 1. The finials on the staves of the State Police flags carried by these battalions were of the normal Luftwaffe pattern.

Notes sur les planches en couleurs

A1 Reichskriegsflagge, introduit le 7 novembre 1935 pour les trois services armés. Les deux faces étaient identiques. **A2** Drapeau du Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring' conservé par II/IR Nr. 37 après la conversion de ces unités de police en bataillons d'infanterie de l'armée. Voir également Planches H3, H4 pour le détail du drapeau Landespolizei.

B1 Drapeau de bataillon d'armée, ici le Waffenfarbe blanc de l'infanterie. Seule la couleur du fond changeait selon les branches du service. Soie, 125cm de côté. Notez sur toutes ces planches que le côté 'gauche' (comme ici) signifie le côté visible si vous vous trouvez en face du porteur, la hampe se trouvant à sa droite et le drapeau flottant vers sa gauche. La banderole commémorative prévue mais non attribuée pour l'Anschluss autrichien est illustrée ici. **B2** Drapeau Pionier-Bataillon en Waffenfarbe noir. Le côté 'droit' ou envers, est illustré, pour montrer le dessin partagé par tous les drapeaux de bataillon de toutes les branches de service. **B3** Drapeau de bataillon, face gauche, pour Jäger-Bataillonen et Gebirgsjäger-Bataillonen, en Waffenfarbe vert. **B4** Dessin spécial du drapeau du III (Jäger) Bataillon, IR Nr. 92, 'Jäger-Btl. Finnland', commandé en novembre 1941.

C1 Etendard d'un régiment de cavalerie, côté gauche. Toutes les branches de service 'montées' portaient des étendards de ce type, en soie du Waffenfarben approprié, 75cm x 51cm avec une 'encoche à la hussarde' sur le côté flottant. **C2** Etendard du Panzer-Bataillon, côté droit. **C3**, **C4** Côté gauche et droit respectivement de l'étendard de bataillon du Pionier Bataillon motorisé et du bataillon de transport et de fourniture.

D1, **D2** Côté gauche et droit respectivement de l'étendard de bataillon des troupes motorisées de fusiliers et de fumée. **D3**, **D4** Côté droit et gauche respectivement de deux dessins présumés d'étendard de bataillon d'avant-guerre pour les unités de reconnaissance et d'infanterie à moto et en camion.

E1 Côté gauche, étendard de bataillon d'artillerie. Également dessin du côté gauche de l'étendard spécial du Führerbegleitbataillon. **E2** Côté droit de l'étendard spécial du Führerbegleitbataillon. **E3** Côté gauche de l'étendard du bataillon des communications. **E4** Obvers, drapeau traditionnel spécial porté par le Grenadier-Regiment Nr.134 'Hoch-und-Deutschmeister' à partir de 1943 après l'annihilation de la 44. Infanterie-Division autrichienne à Stalingrad.

F1, **F2** SA-Standarte, associé au IR Nr. 271 et Panzergrenadier-Division 'Feldherrnhalle' et paré par eux durant les grandes cérémonies. **F3**, **F4** Côté gauche et droit du drapeau de 126cm de côté en soie bleue présenté à toutes les unités Kriegsmarine à terre et à tous les établissements à terre. L'identité de l'unité était gravée sur l'anneau doré placé au milieu de la hampe.

G1, **G2** Côté gauche et droit du Ehrenstandarte présentés par la France à la Legion Condor en avril 1939 et brièvement paré par la Legion en Espagne et en Allemagne avant d'être caché au Ministère de l'Air du Reich en juin. Il mesure 53cm x 52cm et son côté droit était celui d'un régiment nationaliste espagnol avec les armes nationales de 1938. Les rubans portaient les couleurs nationales et ceux de la Médaille Militaire espagnole. **G3**, **G4** Côté gauche et droit pour une unité Flakartillerie et une unité volante respectivement du drapeau d'unité de la Luftwaffe, 126cm de côté. Trois Waffenfarben étaient utilisés pour les fonds: le rouge pour Flak, l'or jaune pour les unités volantes et l'or brun pour les unités de communications. **G5** montre la banderole dessinée mais non émise pour l'occupation de Sudetenland.

H1 Côté gauche, drapeau d'unité de communications de la Luftwaffe. **H2** Etendard traditionnel, dessin du II/FJR Nr. 1 pour les bataillons motorisés d'infanterie de l'armée. Cette unité fut constituée à partir de l'unité de parachutisme expérimentale de l'armée et détenait déjà cet étendard avant sa conversion à la Luftwaffe. **H3** Côté gauche du drapeau Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring' conservé par le I Btl., Regiment 'General Göring' après sa transformation en une unité de combat de la Luftwaffe. Notez l'unique l'emblème en bouclier 'Kreuz des Südens' un peu en dessous du centre. Cette unité perpétua les traditions de l'ancienne police coloniale allemande en Afrique orientale. **H4** Côté droit du même dessin de drapeau, moins le 'Kreuz des Südens' que portaient les II & III Btl., Regt. 'General Göring' et I/FJR Nr. 1.

Farbtafeln

A1 Reichskriegsflagge, die am 7. November 1935 für alle drei Streitkräfte eingeführt wurde. Beide Seiten sind gleich. **A2** Flagge der Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring', die von II/IR Nr. 37 beibehalten wurde, als die Polizeigruppen in Heerinfanteriebataillone umgewandelt wurden. Man beachte auch die Farbtafeln H3 und H4, auf denen die Flagge der Landespolizei besser erkenntlich ist.

B1 Armeebataillonsflagge, hier in der weißen Waffenfarbe der Infanterie – lediglich die Waffenfarbe war bei den einzelnen Truppengattungen unterschiedlich. Seide, 125 Quadratzentimeter; man beachte, daß auf diesen Tafeln durchgehend die 'linke' Seite (wie hier) die Seite ist, die man sieht, wenn man dem Flaggenträger gegenübersteht. Die Fahnenstange befindet sich an seiner rechten Seite, und die Flagge fliegt zu seiner Linken. Das vorgesehene, jedoch nicht eingeführte Fahnenband für den österreichischen Anschluß ist hier zu sehen. **B2** Flagge des Pionier-Bataillons in schwarzer Waffenfarbe; die 'rechte' Seite, beziehungsweise die Rückseite, ist abgebildet und zeigt das Muster, das auf allen Bataillonsflaggen zu sehen war, gleichgültig welcher Truppengattung. **B3** Bataillonsflagge, linke Seite, für Jäger-Bataillone und Gebirgsjäger-Bataillone in der grünen Waffenfarbe. **B4** Spezielles Muster der Flagge des III. (Jäger) Bataillon, IR Nr. 92, 'Jäger-Btl. Finnland', das im November 1941 angeordnet wurde.

C1 Standarte des Kavallerie-Regiments, linke Seite. Alle 'berittenen' Truppengattungen trugen Standarten mit diesem Muster, die aus Seide waren und die jeweilige Waffenfarbe hatten. Sie waren 75cm x 51cm groß und hatten einen 25cm tiefen 'Husarenschnitt' an der wehenden Seite. **C2** Standarte des Panzer-Bataillons, rechte Seite. **C3**, **C4** Rechte beziehungsweise linke Seite der Bataillonsstandarten der motorisierten Pionier- und Transport- und Versorgungsbataillone.

D1, **D2** Linke beziehungsweise rechte Seite der Bataillonsstandarten der motorisierten Geschütz- und Rauchtruppen. **D3**, **D4** Rechte beziehungsweise linke Seite zweier angenommener Muster für Bataillonsstandarten aus der Vorkriegszeit für Spähtruppen und Motorrad- und Lastwagen- Infanterieeinheiten.

E1 Linke Seite einer Standarte des Artillerie-Bataillons; ebenso das Muster auf der linken Seite der Sonderstandarte des Führerbegleitbataillons. **E2** Linke Seite der Standarte des Fernmeldebataillons. **E4** Vorderseite der Sondertraditionsflagge des Grenadier-Regiments Nr. 134, 'Hoch- und Deutschmeister' aus dem Jahr 1943 nach der Vernichtung der österreichischen 44. Infanterie-Division in Stalingrad.

F1, **F2** SA-Standarte, die IR Nr. 271 und der Panzergrenadier-Division 'Feldherrnhalle' zugeschrieben wurde und die bei feierlichen Anlässen getragen wurde. **F3**, **F4** Linke und rechte Seite der Flagge, aus blauer Seide und 126 Quadratzentimeter groß. Sie wurde an alle Landeinheiten und Küstenstützpunkte der Kriegsmarine ausgegeben. Die Kennzeichnung der betreffenden Einheit wurde auf den vergoldeten Ring in der Mitte der Fahnenstange eingraviert.

G1, **G2** Linke und rechte Seite der Ehrenstandarte, die Franco im April 1939 der Legion Condor überreichte, und die kurzzeitig von der Legion in Spanien und in Deutschland getragen wurde, bis sie im Juni des gleichen Jahres im Reichsluftministerium verwahrt wurde. Sie mißt 53cm x 52cm, und die rechte Seite stammt von einem spanischen Nationalistenregiment mit dem 1938er Nationalwappen; die Fahnenbänder sind in den Nationalfarben und den Farben der spanischen Militärmedaille. **G3**, **G4** Linke beziehungsweise rechte Seite der Flagge der Luftwaffe für eine Flakartillerie-Einheit und einen fliegenden Verband, 126 Quadratzentimeter groß. Es gab drei Waffenfarben: rot für die Flak, goldgelb für die Fernmeldeeinheiten. Bei **G3** sieht man das entworfenen, jedoch nicht ausgegebene Fahnenband für die Besetzung des Sudetenlands.

H1 Linke Seite der Flagge der Fernmeldeeinheit der Luftwaffe. **H2** Traditionsstandarte, II/FJR Nr. 1, nach dem Muster für die motorisierten Infanterie-Bataillone; diese Einheit entstand aus der frühen, versuchsweisen Fallschirmspringereinheit der Armee und hatte diese Standarte bereits, bevor sie der Luftwaffe angeschlossen wurde. **H3** Linke Seite der Flagge der Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring', die das I Btl., Regiment 'General Göring' beibehielt, als es zu einer Kampfeinheit der Luftwaffe wurde. Man beachte das einzigartige Schildzeichen 'Kreuz des Südens' in der unteren Mitte; diese Einheit setzte die Tradition der alten Deutsch-Ostafrika-Kolonialpolizei fort. **H4** Rechte Seite der Flagge im gleichen Muster ohne das 'Kreuz des Südens', wie sie vom II & III Btl., Regt. 'General Göring' und I/FJR Nr. 1 getragen wurde.

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